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PRESENTED BY

Newport Reading Room.

Sept: 24. 1912

My dear Miss Hoyt

I am exceedingly obliged to you for the Drayton letters & much of those days. and the incidents narrated by him are familiar to me - a participant in many - that it seems, in reading his descriptions -

ultimate disposition of
the ~~papers~~ letters to my dis
cretion. I shall take them to
Washington with me in a
few days, and regard them
as a desirable addition to the
Navy Dept: Library - which
would seem to be the logical
place for it - unless it be
thought more appropriate to

Brothers" plantation, in that
vicinity. the only human being
to greet us was an old slave
who exclaimed- "Fore God Massa
Percy Jase so glad to see
you"! to be born in the
South as I was and
for many Generations. the
scene was indeed the most perfect
I ever never to be forgotten

that - that thrilling epoch in our Country's history was but of yesterday - instead of half a century old - we were together tho' in different ships for two years off the Coast of South Carolina and the day after we captured the "Fortifications at Hilton Head" & "Bay point." I visited with him his

to the Library of

Newport Reading Room.

the Naval Academy

Grayson was the

accepted "beau ideal"

of all naval officers

who best knew

him and could

appreciate his

magnificent qualities of head & heart

& loyalty to the Flag.

Every word he uttered

& in relation to

our duty to country

& flag & Camp & a

message of noble
loyalty to the old
spirit of my
profession and
shewed there ideas
should be perpet-
=uated through
the ages to come
Words cannot
pronounce an eul
=ogy worthy of that
noble man & true
patriot!
Thanking you
again for the plea
=sure of reading

such emanations
from such a char
acter as ~~Stay~~
Commodore Per
cival Drayton
was - I am
very faithfully
yours

Jno. K. Mitchell
Rear Admiral
&
Dean of the
Service

NAVAL LETTERS

FROM

CAPTAIN PERCIVAL DRAYTON

1861—1865

PRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS PRESENTED TO THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY BY MISS GERTRUDE L. HOYT.

NEW YORK
1906

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Copy 2

Gift
Miss Gertrude L. Hoyt
A. 2 '12

NAVAL LETTERS FROM CAPTAIN PERCIVAL DRAYTON, 1861-1865.

The Drayton letters printed herewith came to the New York Public Library from Miss Gertrude L. Hoyt, with the following note:

My dear Dr. Billings

The following letters were written during the war of the rebellion to my father, Lydig M. Hoyt and to Alexander Hamilton, grandson of General Hamilton, by Captain Percival Drayton, U. S. N.

He belonged to a distinguished family of South Carolina. His grandfather, William Drayton, was a jurist in colonial times, and on the adoption of the constitution in 1789, was appointed the first United States Judge for South Carolina. His father, also named William, was educated in England for the law and enjoyed an extensive practice in 1812, when he was commissioned lieutenant-colonel of infantry in the war with Great Britain. In this service he rose to be colonel and afterwards inspector general. After the war he became Recorder of Charleston and in 1824 was elected to a seat in Congress which he occupied until 1833. During this period occurred the great contest over Nullification. In the face of strong pressure brought to bear by the government of his native state and by his personal friends and relatives, Drayton steadily and effectively opposed that principle as fatal to the authority of the United States government. President Jackson offered him the Secretaryship of War and the Mission to England both of which he declined. On retiring from Congress, he found his residence in Charleston less agreeable on account of his position which he had taken in the contest over nullification, and he removed to Philadelphia where he succeeded Nicholas Biddle as President of the United States Bank, and died in 1846.

The strength of character which inspired William Drayton in his opposition to nullification, was continued in his son Percival who remained true to the national government when his native state and his own brothers had taken up arms against it and when he himself was tempted by offers of high command in the Confederate service. Born in Charleston, 25th August, 1812, he entered the navy as a midshipman in 1827, became lieutenant in 1838 and saw sea service with the Brazilian, Mediterranean, and Pacific squadrons. After duty in the naval observatory at Washington, he took part in ordnance experiments with Farragut, then ranking as commander, and with him formed an intimate and lasting friendship. In 1855 he was promoted to commander and in 1858 took part in the Paraguay expedition.

The opening of the War of the Rebellion found him on ordnance duty at the Philadelphia navy yard. He was placed in command of the *Pawnee* in the squadron of Admiral Dupont, who wrote to the secretary of the navy:

"This steamer, under her zealous and efficient commander, Captain P. Drayton, with her light draft and heavy armament has been invaluable in our operations on the coast, as well as in holding the inland waters." In 1862 he was placed in command of the new Ericsson monitor *Passaic*, in which vessel he bombarded Fort McAllister and took part in the attack of Admiral Dupont on Fort Sumter. Of his conduct then, Dupont wrote to the secretary of the navy: "I cannot close this communication without speaking of Captain Drayton who has been one of my commanding officers since October, 1861. He has performed this service with that ability, judgment and calm courage which has ever marked his execution of my orders." In 1864, Drayton commanded Farragut's flagship the *Hartford* and acted as fleet-captain. In his report of the operations at Mobile Bay, Farragut said of Drayton "He is the fleet-captain of my squadron, and one of more determined energy, untiring devotion to duty and zeal for the service, tempered by great calmness, I do not think adorns any navy." At the conclusion of the war, Drayton was appointed chief of the Bureau of Navigation, and while occupied with that duty, he died on the 4th of August, 1865.

Sincerely yours

GERTRUDE L. HOYT.

The letters are here printed in full as written with the exception of family and personal matters, such omissions being indicated by the usual " . . . ".

PHILA May 19th, 61

MY DEAR HOYT

I suppose you are at length quite settled down and begin to have a home feeling for the Point and I only wish that I could run on for a day or two, and look at the place under its new aspect, and get that splendid mansion into my head as the seat of refinement and elegance, instead of a mere place where extra servants and school mistresses could be conveniently stowed away. I am afraid however that for some time to come yet, it must remain in my memory as it appeared last summer, there seems so little chance of my getting away from here long enough to pay you a visit even of a day. for just as the work on hand seems to be coming to a conclusion, other appears to take its place, the fact being that at the very moment when every possible convenience that we have ever had for naval preparation is required, we have not only lost two of our principal navy yards, but at the same time immense quantities of stores now very difficult to replace, particularly the arms, both great and small. We are so near to the immediate scene of operations, that there is constant demand on us for aid and protection in some form or other,or rather there was before the opening of the Baltimore route, the reestablishment of which seems to have produced a very quieting effect on the publick mind, although I believe myself that nothing but either a large military force, or the moral effect of constant success to our arms, will keep the secession

mob quiet. By the bye what does Hamilton think of his friend McLane. I for one will certainly never have anything to do with him if I can help it, to think that with all the apparent kind feeling he exhibited for New York and New Yorkers, that at the bottom there was nothing but bitterness and hatred to the whole North, where he had received so much kindness, the fact is that slavery seems to have turned the feelings of the whole community where it exists to gall, towards all those who do not believe it a divine institution, and one without which true civilization cannot exist. That were the sword in one hand powerful enough, they would carry it in the other to the uttermost parts of the Union I am satisfied, and I do not think that the North have been at all too quick in stopping the movement. Another four years of Southern domination would have besides taking all the arms to that section, have virtually inaugurated the Slave trade, so that by the time the North had again obtained power, it would also have been a recognized institution. I must confess, that the whole conduct of the South has destroyed the little sympathy I once had for them, and I only hope that the designing and ambitious politicians of that section, will be so completely put down, as to enable the people once more to think for themselves, and see that they have been lead by just such men as Arnold and Burr, and I believe that whatever may be the feeling for a moment, that all persons who attempt to destroy the greatness and unity of their native land History stamps as traitors sooner or later, and believing as I do that a country can recover from anything except dismemberment, I hope that the war will be carried on until any party advocating anything so suicidal is crushed out, and I for one will do all in my power to further what I consider so desirable

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Navy Yard Philada, July 15 61

My dear Hoyt

In the daily routine of my duties here it seems only a day or two since I last heard from you although I suspect that some weeks would not cover the lapsed time, so I think it is proper to delay no longer my acknowledgments for your very pleasant letter which really contained an immense deal of most important information, and completely put me au courant of the events on the river in your neighborhood. I have been hoping all along that something would turn up to allow me to run on for a few days to your part of the country, but really can yet see no particular chance of my wishes being fulfilled, as one thing no sooner is over than another commences. I still do not despair however of seeing you before the summer is over although it can scarcely be for more than a couple of days, in the meantime I am so much better off than almost all of my brother officers about here, that I cannot venture to complain. I get up to Torresdale near by every afternoon, so that at least I sleep comfortably out of the noise and excitement of the city, and I always manage a ride, and dip into the river before our seven o'clock breakfast to enable me to bear up against the heat and

worry of the town. I should like very much to have a talk with you on the present state of affairs, and which would not I am satisfied prove us to hold very different opinions. Mine I consider pretty clearly expressed in the President's speech, Grows address, and Everetts lecture, with all of whom I cordially agree. We have it seems to me still two rather knotty questions to solve which however will no doubt soon work themselves clear, what is to be done with the nigger and the privateersman, for we can neither stop one from running away or the other from taking our vessels by any means of repression that we possess. No number of ships not the united navies of France England and the U States can prevent privateers in limited numbers from getting to sea occasionally, or when there from making captures and I believe that if the Southerners should be able to steal many vessels that it will create such a feeling as to settle our nigger policy at once, and cause a general emancipation by order, of all darkies within reach of our armies. I for one dont believe that their will ever be peace between the two sections until slavery is so completely scotched as to make extension a hopeless matter, then I think we may live together in peace, the North satisfied that a time may be counted on when the institution must wear itself out, the South contented to make the most of the present, but as to dreaming that two people are to remain at peace hemmed in between the lakes and Gulph of Mexico, with entirely different opinions on so many subjects social and political and likely to clash more and more with every year seems to me utterly impossible. I am satisfied there will be no rest until we can see plainly in the future free labour to the gulph or they slave to Canada, there is no middle path. Every one talks very loud about secession and judging from state papers this is the great cause of discord. It is all stuff the cause is the nigger and nothing else, and were other means found more likely to hold him as he is his owner would come out as strongly for central power tomorrow as the most violent northerner.

I believe that today a compromise can be made securing slavery where it now is, but not even this for many days more, unless we should be very badly beaten, a thing not likely. I think myself the Southerners are fighting against fate or human progress which is the same thing, and the sooner they give in the better. In the meantime although quite willing to take my share in the struggle I dont think it would exactly do to force myself forward,but shall remain quietly where I am until called on. They do not however seem to give me much credit for scruples in Washington, as the officer in charge of detail excused himself to me the other day for not having ordered me off, but he said that just at present the fitting out of vessels was too important to permit of a change. It seems that some one had told him that I was becoming quite restive for service. Should any chance offer of paying you a visit I will take advantage of it, and in the mean time shall expect to hear from you particularly if you intend going away from home as I should not like to come up the river and miss you. Kind remembrances to Mrs. Hoyt Angelica and the Children. Hope my god daughter has not forgotten me quite if you find out that she has not give her a kiss for me, and believe me as always

Your friend

P. Drayton

Navy Yard Philadelphia Augt 19 61

My dear Hoyt

I have been anxiously looking for some cessation of work here which would permit me to come on and see you and all my numerous friends in the neighbourhood of Staatsburg if only for twenty-four hours, but so far it has been entirely out of the question. I hope however to be able very soon or when I finish with the outfits of a flotilla which is being prepared for the Mississippi to accomplish my purpose of a few days leave. The trouble has been so far that we are so convenient to the scene of operations that if a vessel requires any hurried alterations or repairs she is generally consigned to us which keeps every one in a state of constant hurry and more or less worry.

Manassas was a severe blow no doubt although a more disgraceful affair could scarcely have taken place still that it may have saved us from greater calamities in the future, as had we conquered there all discipline in an army and efficiency intelligence or preparation for their duties in either officer or man would have been looked upon as fogyism, and all the evils from which we have and are now suffering would have been aggravated ten fold. Whether our men are going to fight much better in the future remains to be seen but evidently the leaders do not feel very much confidence in their pluck or they would not so persistently remain on the defensive everywhere. Now undoubtedly the Southerner has the great advantage of being in earnest, and having a rule strong enough to turn whatever material exists to the best advantage. While we are whining about habeas corpus and all kind of abstractions he is acting, knowing that when arms are once taken up all other questions are absorbed in the great one of victory or defeat. We used to talk a great deal about the Americans love of country I dont believe myself from what we have seen that it exists, or here in the countrys greatest stress we could not see whole regiments march from the battle field to the sound of cannon because their time had expired a day and others deserting by thousands at the first discharge of guns from troops as raw as themselves. The fact is that I do not see any hope for a country where cowardice is not disgraceful, and where people who behaved like the fire zouaves can have the impudence to not only require but obtain a publick reception on their return from a campaign where they literally proved themselves wolves in peace lambs in war. Then to think of a Maine regiment mutinying rather than fight, if the New Englanders who perhaps have had more to do with bringing on the issue than any others except the Carolinians begin already to desert, what hope is there for the others. I must confess we seem to be in a bad way between soldiers who wont fight and the civilians who do nothing but rob. Still all this may be corrected under the strong pressure of events, but we cannot wipe out that page of history that contains Bull Run. Of course I cannot but feel the utmost contempt for all of that class who believing the quarrel a just one lose heart at the first want of success, a peace made which should be based on even the mildest Southern requirements would wipe us out from any respectable position in the family of nations for half a century with the loss not only of power but of character, and I for one would rather see the war carried on to the last man than think of such a thing. The fact is that there cannot be two independent

equal nations on this continent, either the nigger or white interest must rule it, and I think it now that the issue has come worth struggling to keep down the former. However we will talk over all of these things when I come on which I hope to be able to do ere long. By the bye what do you think of Gormans report about the flag of the Minnesota regiment. If the valour of the soldiers is to be measured irrespective of other reports by that which alludes to the number of shot holes in the flag, I am afraid that the old dodge of the New York target companies with their targets will be practised on a pretty extensive scale with our standards.

However I have not time to write any more at present. I am quite well, do what I can in the way of exercise, get up every morning except Sunday at half past five, and consequently sleep like a top when I am in bed. I am afraid I am behindhand in pedestrianism but I have not time for everything.

Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hoyt and all of the former Staatsburg people and believe me

Yours most sincerely
P. Drayton

Mr. L. M. Hoyt
Staatsburg

U. S. S. Pochahontas
Washington Oct 12 61

My dear Mrs Hoyt

Just before leaving I am sending you a copy of the Vernon gallery which you seemed once to have admired, in hope that if you should continue to do so it may serve occasionally to remind you of an old friend, who will most probably not be by any means as comfortably situated as he would be were he occupying a room at the Point, his vessel not being likely to afford very much of that protection against the winter weather which is to be met with in a well established house like yours. However if people think that in this world what the world values is to be obtained in its pleasant avenues, they are much mistaken, and I for one do not expect such a thing, and am quite prepared to take the rough when it comes, satisfied that it will make the smooth more enjoyable later. My vessel is not a very large one, but has the great advantage of light draught and at least one tremendously big gun, which with a small rifle one makes me prepared for any thing far or near, the others answering very well for the ordinary occasions. I have a quiet nice set of officers, the first Lieutenant being a young man son of Professor Mahan at West Point, whom I examined at the Naval school only two years since, so he is young enough at least not to have too fixed ways and is quite clever. I was to have sailed to-day for our rendezvous, but am still here owing to the vessels in New York not being ready yet. I was offered a much larger vessel than the one I am in, the *Pawnee*, which is lying alongside of the yard here, but as she is scarcely more than a steam battery,

owing to her wretched qualities at sea, I concluded to keep the one which would be most efficient when outside, and likely to be most active. The Navy Yard here seems a favourite lounging place of Old Abe and his wife, who are here almost every day. My friend Dahlgren wants to present me, but I have so far been always out of the way, but as he is a friend of the family, he offers to take me up any evening to tea. The city is very quiet scarcely any soldiers to be seen and quite orderly. I intend if possible to visit the fortifications before leaving but have not yet had time, the getting a ship ready being very much like furnishing a house there being always something wanted to completion.

I hope Mr. Hoyt is well again. My brother the Doctor is like him chafing a little under forced inaction, arising from the same cause, which has been rather aggravated recently, by the offer of a majority in a cavalry regiment, which is said to be the best one perhaps yet raised. Remember me to him and with a kiss for Gertrude believe me as always

Yours most sincerely
P. Drayton

Mrs. L. M. Hoyt, Staatsburg,
N. Y.

U. S. S. Pochahontas
Hampton Roads Oct 25 61

My dear Hoyt

I suppose you think it almost time for us to be off from this part of the world and move further South and so we should have done had the army contingent made its appearance at the proper time. Considering the weather however that we have had for the last three days it is rather well that it did not as had we been at sea during the gale of the last few days there would have been such a scatteration of the vessels composing our force as would have rendered it extremely difficult to have collected them again in one body, to say nothing of the chances of collision at night. Where we go I do not of course know, it being a regular secret of Polchinello only common to Newspaper people and the general publick. Until this morning I have been pushed out as a kind of vedette towards Norfolk to guard against any night attack which the large number of defenceless ships at present here might induce the Secessers to make, although I dont think such a thing very probable, still it does no harm to guard against it, as a fire ship let loose in the crowd that at present fills up the bay, might do much mischief. I fully expected to have met Hamilton here, but I suppose the cry of all those helpless clients, was too much for him,and he had to yield. As this is likely for some time to be a rather uninteresting field of operations, I dont think he will lose much by quitting it. We have collected here at present, the most extraordinary variety of vessels big and small, that one can imagine, from the *Minnesota* and *Wabash* down to the smallest possible representative of a man of war, and from the *Atlantic* to a ferry boat, all belonging to the squadron

bound south, which if it does nothing else, will have tended to keep our southern friends in a most unpleasant state of uncertainty as to what it is after. The difficulties in the way of combined expeditions like ours are so great and that very uncertain element the weather is so important a one that it is not astonishing should they sometimes fail. I only hope that ours will turn out all right. It will at least utilise some of the force which is doing nothing at Washington except to hold a strong position which ought to be safe with half the force collected there were it worth anything, and if it is not the mere swelling of its numbers, particularly now that they seem determined to close the Potomac, is a positive disadvantage. I thought until the affair at Hatteras the other day, that the morale of the army had improved, but since the behaviour of the Indiana regiment there, I have come to the conclusion that another Bull run might not be impossible.

I dont know when we are likely to meet again I hope before very long, but in the meantime I wish you a very pleasant winter in the country with good health to enjoy it. I shall probably go through a fair show of hardship myself, before it is over, but can stand it I supect as well as most people. I sent Mrs Hoyt some books as I was leaving Philadelphia which I trust were duly received, and with kind remembrances to her Angelica and the children I am as always

Yours sincerely
P. Drayton

Mr. L. M. Hoyt

A letter care of Naval Lyceum New York directed South Atlantic Squadron will always reach me.

U. S. S. Pawnee
Port Royal Nov 30 61

My dear Hoyt

I have been intending to write you for some time back, but really have not been able to find time, and the newspapers keep up such a constant stream of information about our movements and supply it so much sooner than can be done by private hand that I would scarcely venture to attempt encroaching on their perogative, which seems to be to keep the hungry maw of the publick filled whether with lies or truth seems to matter very little. We have been expecting every day to receive an order to move South but it has not yet come. The fact is that the army cannot be left until it is self sustaining, which it is scarcely yet, had it been much more than a mob, which it was not at landing, we could have had either Charleston or Savannah, for such a panic as seems to have existed through the low country, can scarcely be described. Bull run was hardly equal to it as a scare. I really believe that a thousand men could have marched over the State. Of course all this is now very much changed, and if we do not soon go in search of them they must and will take the initiative. It is a great pity that we cannot learn by experience the importance of time in military operations.

Ten thousand men could have done more two weeks since, than forty could now, but they seem to begrudge every man sent away from Washington, and when there they appear perfectly useless, so far as operating against the enemy goes. Thirty thousand men sent here two weeks since would have caused every Southern Soldier to have been withdrawn from the Potomac and McClellan might now have his own way there.

I have just returned from an examination of St. Helens Sound, and the adjacent rivers, which I was ordered to make with my vessel and some of the Gunboats, and found the same state of things as here, although it is so much nearer Charleston. I took possession of three forts, which, had the people remained in them, might have given a great deal of trouble, and went up the rivers as far as the water permitted and was in about an hour and a half pull of Mr. Aiken's where I am sure I might have gone with perfect ease, had there been any object in so doing. Not a white man to be seen anywhere, nothing but niggers, who were perfectly idle, but very friendly, and ready to work as long as we wanted. I employed about fifty for a morning to bring off military stores from Fort Heyward one of the places I took possession of, and I overheard one of them say, that they ought to work for us, in return for what we were doing for them. I asked one fellow whether they told him that we were coming to carry them off to Cuba. he said yes massa. Well said I did you believe it. His answer showed I thought some quickness, and was had I believed it do you think I would have been here. They do not seem to hate their masters or I think they would burn houses, which they do not, but they have so completely made up their mind that they are to be free, that I think it will be no easy matter to retain them, however matters end. I went up to Beaufort about a week ago. At first sight the city looks as usual (and a very pretty place it is with a row of as elegant residences belonging to the high aristocracy on the water, as one often sees,) but open any door and walk in, and you see at once the change; every house has been gutted thoroughly by the niggers. I went into Mr. Nat Heywoods perhaps the finest house there, but found only a piano some bedsteads and such like articles, too heavy for easy transportation. The shops had been thoroughly cleaned out. What is singular and goes to prove that there cannot exist that bitter hatred which has been suspected, there has been no attempt to fire the buildings. While up the Ashepoo river, I visited Hutchinson island and found everything in pretty good order, I suppose considerably over a hundred slaves as usual doing nothing as the overseer had gone off. They seemed delighted to see us, asked me when we were going to free them, and offered to lead me to the nearest picket of confederates, about two miles off, when we heard heavy firing in the direction of the *Pawnee* which I had left at the entrance of the river. Supposing it to proceed from an attack of some of the steamers which are in the Edisto, on that vessel, I hurried every one on board of the gun boats, and went down to see what was the matter and on arriving found that it was a false alarm the sounds being really in the direction of Port Royal. As I had a great deal more to do, and my time was limited, I was not able to return to Hutchinson Island. Mrs. March's house there seemed not to have been disturbed, any quantity of French books no doubt brought by

John March lying about, and scattered in different directions letters directed to Mrs. March, which I brought with me, and now enclose to you for John, to save them from being read by the first party of soldiers who find their way in that direction. I also send you an old account book which might have some value from its antiquity and which was lying with some rubbish on the floor, and would be soon pitched aside as rubbish. You see we have got Tybee and I suppose shall soon the other ports. I was on shore yesterday to try and persuade Sherman to send men at once to occupy the fort on Otter Island, one of those which I discovered in St. Helena Sound, and which is the key to every thing in that part of the country; he was wonderfully impressed with the advantages to be derived from taking possession of the place, as it not only shuts up St. Helena Sound but the Ashepoo and Combahee rivers as well as closes the outlet of Charleston inland, but as yet nothing has been done and I suppose he will wait until the enemy return to occupy it. I should take Sherman to be a mighty slow coach. and I suspect if he does not stir himself they will begin to suspect that the right man is not in the right place. To think of my pitching here right into such a nest of my relations, my brother, William Heyward, Tatnall &c it is very hard but I cannot exactly see the difference between their fighting against me and I against them except that their cause is as unholy a one as the world [h]as ever seen and mine just the reverse. Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hoyt and let me know how you make out in the country. If you could only get our climate here you would no doubt find it more pleasant, so far we have had it rather too warm.

Yours sincerely
P. Drayton

You must excuse my not putting stamps on this letter but we are entirely out of them

Mr. L. M. Hoyt
Staatsburg, Dutchess Co. N. Y.

U S S Pawnee
Tybee Roads Jany 18 62

My dear Hoyt

I am very glad to hear from you once more, and cannot but think that your reasons for deserting the country at this season are all convincing, cities being almost as intellectual as the country is for the physical development of children. although as Syl's are not yet at the age when the former requires special attention she can afford to consult her own particular taste or convenience on the present occasion I should like of all things to drop in on them now at Marshalls, and see the routine of one day, One thing is at least certain, that in an economic view, and that is not one of little importance in these times, the Hyde Park party are right in their course, as they at least are relieved from all those

daily demands on the purse, which although not strictly necessary, are scarcely in a city more to be avoided than if there was a law for them. I have been here in command of a small squadron for the last three weeks, to which is entrusted the blockade of the Savannah river, the protection of the soldiers on Tybee Island, and the repression of Tatnall and his small fleet. I am lying in front of Fort Pulasky, and a little over two and a half miles distant, quite within range of any decent sized rifle gun, but apparently beyond any that they possess, the largest shell that has been yet thrown weighing only twenty pounds, they have however been gradually nearing us, and two days back came within two hundred yards, which I am very sorry for, as not being able to do any injury in return when they begin to throw shot over me, I must move my anchorage, which I do not want to do, as it is exposed enough to the Easterly winds where I am, and will become more so the further off I go. I am so much better off however than the outside blockading squadron, that I do not feel myself entitled to complain. In the mean time the weather as regards temperature is delightful, as you may suppose, when I tell you that I have scarcely felt the want of fire, and indeed a few days in each week may be put down as too warm. I have been kept so constantly moving about, that this fixed position is becoming a little tiresome, and I am quite ready to go anywhere, so that it does not take me yet into cold weather, I do not however as you may suppose with my capacity for reading ever find a day really too long, particularly as my fondness for German has not in the least abated, and one of the regiments on Tybee being entirely composed of persons of that nationality, I find opportunities occasionally of doing a little of the colloquial, and do not run the risk which some of my officers do, of being detained by a sentry from the impossibility of intelligent conversation or explanation. My cousin Tatnall takes a look at me with his squadron every now and then, showing an immense admiral's flag to our admiring and wishful gaze, but as he does not leave the protection of Pulasky there the matter ends. You seem to think with many others that the question of what is to be done with the slaves, is a knotty one, I agree with you in the main, but consider that for the present we have nothing to do better than to weaken their masters, and strengthen ourselves by holding on to all we can lay our hands on, and this I for one have no scruples in doing, obeying as I am the most positive directions of the Secretary of the Navy. My brother referring to one or two reports that I have made on different reconnaissances entrusted to me at the North (and which by the way have sometimes almost been made nonsense of, from carelessness in transferring them to the Newspaper) thinks I am not sound quite on the Constitutional rights of Slave owners, and thinks that they cannot be looked upon as persons, my answer to him was, that when a poor woman comes crying to me for the loss of her children or husband, but whom she could still join by returning to a state of slavery, of which I have had many instances, I cannot but think that at least she has two of the distinctive attributes of the rest of the human race, love of liberty and offspring, and the acknowledgment of the domestic relations. I have probably seen more of the plantation negro than any other officer here, and one thing has struck me very forcibly and that is the entire absence of any idea that he can injure his master, although I have seen many of this class who had been hunted down like wild

animals shot at and even severely wounded. They seemed to have no desire of revenge, and before anything like a servile insurrection could be probable, there must be active interference on the part of the whites. This when we think of St. Domingo is not to be accounted for. I sent the other day to my brother another package of letters for John March, and I wish you would say that the reason I brought them away was because I did not like to destroy them, and knew that in a few days our troops would be there in occupation which was the case. By the bye one of the incidents of my last visit to the North Edisto would certainly go to prove that the panic incidental to our occupation of Port Royal has not ceased yet. Supposing the Fort at the entrance of the river to be occupied, I fired at it to draw a return and make out its character, this it seems so alarmed a large camp of soldiers near a small town called Rockville, that during the night they decamped, and when I the next morning learning of their neighborhood, went in search of them, I found nothing but an empty camp left in such a hurry, that almost everything had been forgotten, and there were lying about everything that you can think of as appertaining to a soldiers life. I heard afterwards that there had been nearly a full regiment on the ground, and had they even thrown out a few scouts to satisfy themselves of our small numbers, they might have taken myself and the forty men that I landed with prisoners. I felt at times while busily occupied in removing their tents and other plunder, to the river, from which they were distant a mile, that I might be picked up and shown about Charleston, but then again I felt assured, that people who had gone off in the way my fellow statesmen had, would not be likely to stop short of ten miles which I afterwards found was true. There was no excuse for this flight as their force was three times what I could have landed from my steamers, and they could not have been reached by our guns. What a pity that we had not sooner had some of McClellan's idle soldiers to take advantage of this state of feeling. I am afraid however that we shall never do anything until it is thought possible for soldiers to move beyond the protection of gunboats and fortifications. At present so far as I can judge from what I see and hear no one seems to dream that an army should be able to protect itself. That Savannah could have been taken by a regiment within forty eight hours after the Port Royal affair I have not the least doubt. Now it is altogether different. The last mail brings me a very savage letter from some one who signs herself a southern lady. It is dated from Philadelphia. If the poor creature had an idea of the amusement that her effusion has afforded on board ship she would be very shy of writing any more. As regards myself I feel such a contempt for the whole party and their nigger principles that I should almost feel degraded if I thought any of its members could think well of me. It would certainly be strong evidence of lukewarmness on my part towards that side which I have taken from the sincere belief that it represents not only the higher and lower law but civilization on this side of the Atlantic at least. I am not one of those persons who looks for an immediate end of the war, and think it will most likely in some form or other last my time and have quite made up my mind, that Gymnasiums, horses, excursions to the North River &c &c are things that I shall have no more to do with, until I shall at least have ceased to care much for anything attended with bodily exertion.

and this kind of life that we lead tells on people if I am to judge by the change that a few months has made in my friends here. Some of them seem to have grown older in a few months than they did in years before. One cause for this I however to a great extent do not suffer from, and that is worry, and loss of sleep. I try and I think with success to take things quietly, and manage notwithstanding all the talk about fire ships night attacks &c to get about as undisturbed nights rest except when the weather is very bad as I ever did at Staatsburg. I think with you that the Mayors position must be one of extreme delicacy unless he has entirely eradicated Southern sympathies which can scarcely be the case with Southern property. By the bye on my last reconnaissance I was in sight of Mr. Aikens buildings and had I been so disposed could I am sure have occupied the plantation, which however nothing but positive directions would have induced me to do. On the same occasion at Mr. Seabrooks I found in his deserted house a whale's tooth that I had given to his wife fifteen years ago. I would like of all things to have an after dinner talk with you of a few hours and go over with you all that has happened since we met last, for it seems to me that it is more irksome than ever to write, and I shall never be able to say on paper a tythe of what I should like to.

Tell Mrs Hoyt that I trust my Christmas present did not duplicate any of her books, if it did she must have no scruples in either exchanging it or giving it to some of her friends, taking the will for the deed.

I think now I have given you a pretty fair letter, and with kind remembrances to Mrs. Hoyt and Angelica and a kiss to Gertrude I am as always

Most sincerely yours

P. Drayton

I had almost forgotten to tell you what I have always thought of the Slidell affair, and that is, that it was just such another piece of unjustifiable bullying as that of Ingraham, which was so successful that Wilkes could not resist the temptation also of a little cheap glory, that we can get law for it although no one has been able to show it yet perhaps, but supposing it so it is law founded on decisions made at a time when the tyranny of the seas was at its height, and to support it some law was necessary. However if law is an excuse for everything Shylock was right, and a man should prosecute every friend who owes him five dollars. Like Bull run however I think the lesson we get is almost worth the cost. We were nearly, for the gratification of a little hate, about to sacrifice the future of the country for the next century, and from what I can see we are not yet quite sure of being out of the scrape yet. England is afraid if she lets us off. Then to get out of it in such a sneaking way, makes the matter ten times worse an honest backing down would have been respectable in comparison.

Mr L. M. Hoyt
107 West 14th St, New York.

U. S. S. Pawnee
Port Royal Mch 24 1862

My dear Hoyt

I have been absent now from this our Southern federal capital for three months, and would not now have got back, were it not that it was absolutely necessary to return for the purpose of replenishing my stores, which owing to such a long absence from head quarters, have almost given out. I think if there is any indebtedness in the way of letters it is on your part, but as you are like a ghost, I will speak first, desiring as I do to hear what you have been doing with yourself this winter. We have now a spell of cold weather here, the last I suppose for the season. At Fernandina where I have been for near three weeks, we have been suffering from heat and mosquitoes, and having passed through the cold stage, we shall now look for the regular annoyances of a Southern climate during the coming six months, if the war lasts so long which sanguine people think however it will not, but of which I have my doubts, not that I dont believe in our continued victories, both seeing and hearing of the utter demoralization that apparently exists everywhere south, but still the terribly bitter feeling that prevades niggerdom is such, that I am afraid the union feeling on the resussitation of which peace must depend will be more difficult to bring about than is generally counted on. There may be some wonderful accident like that of the battle of Baylen in Spain, to infuse a little spirit into the Southern armies but without such an occurrence, I can scarcely believe in a stand being made anywhere. The panic after Bull run is nothing to what is showing itself in the ranks of those who were then victors. Why the places they have deserted in this neighborhood, if occupied by men, might have defied the navies of the world. At Fernandina I could with my ships company alone, in the shore batteries, have blown out of water three times the number of vessels that we had to attack them. and strong points in the St. Johns River were deserted without even spiking the guns, so situated that ours could not even have been elevated to bear on them. You can scarcely conceive anything which more completely indicates a general distrust in their powers, than what I have lately seen myself, and all accounts from the West and I hope soon from the Potomac show the same thing. Still we must not be too sure yet of the result. As we can scarcely expect to hold the South as a conquered people, at least with any comfort, the difficult part of the operation will still remain, even after armies and navies have performed their designated duties. I for one can see no peace while the slavery question remains unsettled, and while any portion of the community consider it a higher and more holy duty, to sell niggers than to have free institutions or civilization, and so far I doubt if our victories have as yet even weakened this belief. I must confess that after what I have seen here, of the horrors of the institution I would be willing to do anything except to destroy the Constitution that the power to do evil to ones fellows which can be and is exercised in many cases here, should within some named time cease, but I believe that to make this feasible there must be a great deal more fighting. We meet here as you may suppose, with a good many remarkable cases bearing on the nigger question. One particularly which one of the officers related to me the other day would answer for Greeley. On

Doboy Island, near St. Simons and Brunswick, they found one poor old man left, and fearing he might starve an offer was made to take him away, which he refused, as he said he had buried his wife only a little before on that spot, and preferred dying there. Some one asked him but have you had no children, yes massa thirteen but they were all sold for pocketmoney, and now that my wife is dead I am all alone. The officer who related the circumstance says, that the piteous manner in which this was said, so affected his companion and self that for some time neither felt like speaking. We have another fellow at present on board of my ship, who had been living in the bush for a year, because as he says he was so cruelly treated that death was better than being a longer subjectted to it. And he must be a pretty determined fellow, for he has been shot at, and bears many marks of what he calls nigger dogs. Now I dont want to take away property enjoyed under the safeguard of the Constitution, but I do say that these horrors should cease by law in the nineteenth century.

Unless they get some steamers to bear on us, I think from all appearances the brunt of the war as regards the Navy is nearly over, the sea coast has been deserted except in the immediate vicinity of the stone forts, and they can only be taken by the army unless we get the *Monitor* down here. There is a report that one of these Monitors is preparing at Savannah, if so I suppose we shall some of us be treated a la *Cumberland,* for there seems to be no more use in attempting to penetrate their hide, than that of some of the fabled knights in enchanted armor. However the *Cumberland* has proved that one may even be sunk creditably. after having passed through the storm and cold of winter, for we have had both in quite sufficient quantity, we may now prepare ourselves for the heat and insects which the people here seem to count on to pay up their oppressors both of which we were even beginning to have a taste before I left Fernandina, to which place I return to day. Let me hear from you, and with kind remembrance to Mrs. Hoyt and a kiss to Gertrude I am as always

Yours most sincerely P. Drayton

I enclose you five dollars, will you subscribe to the Times for six months having it sent to Port Royal to my direction, if you can settle at same time for postage, and should any money be left lay it out in Harpers and Atlantic Monthlys as they appear, beginning with April Nos. Any news agent will do the business for you and prepay the postage.

I send you a bond of the Fernandina R Road of which I took about five hundred Thousand dollars at par thus I consider breaking up a grand swindling operation in embryo, it may be worth something as a curiosity at least.

Where is Carroll Livingston? Some one tells me he has gone to Europe. If he has will you tender for me my resignation to the Yacht Club which I asked him to do some six weeks ago, any thing to pay let me know.

U S S Pawnee
Fernandina April 22 62

My dear Hoyt

In your letter just received you mention that John March feels very indignant at the manner in which Hutchinson Island has been treated. As I suppose that some of this indignation may be directed against me, and would not like to be misunderstood by any one, connected with persons from whom I received so much kindness as the Major and his family, I will here repeat what I may in previous letters have perhaps already stated, in reference to my visits to his mothers plantation.

The first one was made in the latter part of November, and at that time, the cotton houses overseers house, and attached outbuildings had been burnt, and many slaves taken away, the dwelling house was open and in a state of great confusion, the furniture having been to a considerable extent removed. I remained only a short time and allowed nothing whatever to be touched. There were at this time present a number of slaves but no white person. I returned about the tenth of December, when I found that every thing had been destroyed except the dwelling house a few outbuildings, every negro house had been burnt to the ground, and no slaves were left except a few of the old and decrepid. Almost everything had been removed from Mrs. March's house, and the whole place was a scene of perfect desolation, all the work of the secessionists.

My only reason for removing the letters was to prevent their falling into the possession of our soldiers, who I knew would soon be there, and it was evident from their being scattered about in every direction on the floor, that the persons who had taken away the other things, did not think them worth the trouble of removal. As it was not until after my second visit that any of our people came to that part of the country, whatever injury had been done to the plantation, was the work of the overseer or some of the marauding bands, who seemed to have found a great satisfaction in that species of patriotism which exhibits itself in the destruction of their neighbours property. That all the vandalism of their own people was attributed to us in Charleston papers is very natural, and a true story could scarcely be looked for until the world arrives at that pitch of christian civilization where people love their enemies. + I am very sorry for Mr. March's sister but until this matter is entirely settled, her property is not worth the value of an advertisement in the paper and this is the case with all on the coast. The people here have referred their cause to the fate of arms, and can scarcely be surprised at finding themselves in a most unpleasant position when the decision is against them. My own brother will probably like so many others lose everything, but although sorry I think he richly deserves it, even more than others, because he has not the excuse of utter darkness and ignorance of right, like so many of his statesmen. If John March has Southern sympathies, of course he will look upon neither my acts or those of any other officer of this squadron with much fairness, but this of course is to me a very little matter, except as it affects me with his wife's relations, whose good opinion I should be very sorry to lose, although rather than do what would interfere with the success of this great question of human progress and world civilization, I feel quite ready to sacrifice every relation

that I have got in the world, painful as it would be. If we are not successful I dont want to live, and if we are there will always be something to look to in the great future of our country. This is I must confess a little of the highfalutin style of expression but it seems to me at present to be true. Should you at any time think it worth while to copy what I have written I think it would be as well to stop where I have made a cross. You speak of several persons getting into the Southern ports without difficulty, there is no doubt that many cases of small vessels running in have occurred, although nothing like what is pretended, the difficulty in blockading is owing to the number of entrances for small vessels on this coast, many of which we have only found out lately and which even had we known of sooner it would have been next to impossible to close with the comparatively small number of vessels at the command of Du Pont. I dont suppose that even now we could supply a vessel apiece to them, which would not be enough even throwing out of consideration the necessity of going away for coal. As we however now occupy the whole coast, it would be scarcely possible for any more of this work to be carried on, which having the control of the inner lines of communication becomes comparatively easy. Charleston is a port peculiarly difficult to blockade owing to the great distances that the different entrances are apart. I am satisfied that ten vessels are scarcely sufficient to shut it up, and we have scarcely ever been able to spare for the purpose more than two or three, and they of too great draft. As to preventing steamers from running out on a dark stormy night I dont believe fifty vessels could do that.

Every thing goes on here quietly enough except that there is an occasional alarm from the so called Guerrillas at the outposts, but it does not amount to much. I have been off in my little steamer for two days in connection with the army to try and catch some of them, but could do nothing more than seize a large quantity of provisions, the want of which will I think prevent their remaining any longer about here, as the quantity remaining in the State is said to be very small, and corn worth now three dollars a bushel, which you as a farmer will understand to be above the market price at which it usually sells. Much obliged for the Times which has reached me. kind remembrances to Mrs. Hoyt and believe me

Yours most sincerely
P. Drayton

Mr. L. M. Hoyt

I send you a Louisville Journal just to show what an amount of wit Prentiss is letting off weekly, on current events, they say that he never seems to flag, but day after day it is the same thing.

U S S Pawnee
Stono June 22 62

My dear Hoyt

I can well understand that in this period of activity you should chafe at being obliged with your strong interest in the success of our armies to remain

quietly at home, although that home should even be as delightfully situated a one as yours at the Point. I assure you that when suffering from the heat and musquitoes of this Southern pandemonium I look with some longing to that time when I too may be able again to visit you and the Hyde Park people, but strong as my desire to do so may be I would not for an instant think of gratifying it until the country has Peace or I am unfit further to render it service, and indeed from what I can see there is as much need of men now as at any period of the war. The South has instituted a levée en masse and we must do the same if we expect to crush out the rebellion, after the present organized force is once broken then it will be time enough to discontinue the increase of ours, but not before, the fact is as regards mere men we are outnumbered everywhere here overwhelmingly, and I believe now, that were it not for the Navy there is not one single portion occupied by our troops that could be retained, even now we are nothing like as much in earnest as our enemies, they are almost insane from hate and revenge, we in rather good temper and without any as all controlling idea as that afforded by the nigger to them.

Like every one else I should of course have liked much to have been in New Orleans fight, which in addition to its being bold and cleverly managed had so much peculiar to itself to appeal to the imagination, but in war as everywhere else all cannot be the lucky ones, and I for one shall be quite satisfied if it is considered that I have done my duty to the best of my ability where ordered, and so that we are in the end successful will willingly forgo my share of the rewards.

I am here in charge of squadron of eight vessels to keep this river and protect the positions occupied by our troops, who as you will see met with rather a reverse a few days ago. The attack made on strong entrenchments about the character of which we knew little was I think unadvised particularly after giving two weeks notice of our intention. It was the old story of Bunker hill and New Orleans, there is a good deal of talking about a failure being being caused from the supports not coming up, being in the battery and so forth, all of which I am satisfied is mere stuff, we never had a chance, the thing was morally and physically impossible, and had we succeeded for an instant, the enemy's forces were fast coming up in such numbers that the disaster would have been much greater, at least no honor was lost as the leading regiments undoubtedly behaved very well. A few days since I came on Pierre Kane, he is Major of the 47th I think and in temporary command. I congratulated him on his rapid promotion and told him that he illustrated the remark attributed to one of our Militia Generals in Europe who accounted for his high rank though still young from the fact that in young countries like ours everything even promotion was rapid. I also met at same time a very intelligent bright looking nigger who seemed delighted to see me although I had forgotten him and introduced himself as my brothers servant. He was waiting on the officers mess, but although fat and contented was so shabbily dressed, that I told him he ought to strike for higher wages, which he said he had been thinking of.

Genl Hunter is a mild amiable gentleman, and no one seems to be able to imagine how he could have made such a blunder as was the issuing of his edict. It could merely irritate without freeing a nigger, and was very much as if Jeff

Davis was to inform the crew of the *Pawnee* that they were all absolved from their allegiance to our government.

I really think that if Mrs. Hoyt takes care of you she is doing her duty, and might leave the soldiers to persons with not so many incumbrances, however the Southern women are so much in earnest, that I am glad to see a little of the same spirit North. We will need it all before this question is finally settled, our real troubles have not yet come yet in my opinion by any means.

If it was only such weather as any one would come into willingly I would invite you to come and pay me a visit which I could easily arrange now as my clerk went home the other day invalided from an attack of fever that he caught at Fernandina. Should I be detained however until the healthy season I can make you comfortable if inclined to come, and if you had a curiosity to hear the sound of a rifle shot I could put you in the way of it almost any day, as the batteries outside of our lines and on the creeks where I am obliged to go every now and then to reconnoitre, never miss a chance of firing at that emblem of tyranny and oppression the Stars and Stripes.

Kind remembrances to Mrs. Hoyt and Angelica, a kiss to Gertrude who I hope has not entirely forgotten me, and believe me always

Yours friend

P. Drayton

Mr. L. M. Hoyt
Staatsburg New York.

Navy Yard N. Y
Novr 16 62

My dear Hoyt

Hamilton tells me that you will probably come down for a little while when your feet are all right again, as I may have an opportunity of running up to Hyde Park myself during the coming week. Let me know if you are likely to come down that we may not miss each other.

As you will probably see from the ridiculous reports in the papers I made another trip yesterday in the *Passaic* for the purpose of again trying to fire the gun without cutting open the turret, to a certain extent it was a success proving that it may be done if Ericsson will make the chamber which encloses the muzzle strong enough, which he will do when convinced of what I told him from the first that the lateral escape of gas from the muzzle of a large gun is terrific and which was proved yesterday, by the blowing to pieces of his contrivance which he had previously insisted was twice as strong as necessary, this of course his reporters did not notice. Ericsson was unfortunately in his youth a Swedish artillery officer and thinks he knows all about such things, whereas he knows nothing. From the first I have always told him exactly what would occur, and have been invariably right and he wrong, just the reverse of which is stated by his reporter

in the N Y Times, however, if a mans name gets in the paper without his being called a thief or liar he should consider himself fortunate and say nothing.

There must now be another fixing up which must occupy a few more days when Ericsson declares the vessel will be ready to hand over. I hope so, for I am tired of the delays and would rather much be off.

Tell Mrs Hoyt I am much obliged to her for sending the books, and with kind remembrance

Yours most sincerely
P. Drayton

Iron Clad Passaic
Novr 29 *Hampton Roads*

My dear Hamilton

I just have time to send you a few lines to say that I arrived here to day about two o'clock, after a rather long passage considering the weather which was by no means bad, although the sea washed over the vessel like a log and completely flooded everything below, rendering things pretty uncomfortable. This however would have been of little consequence had it been all, but as we neared Cape Charles this morning, some of the stay bolts in the boiler gave way, filling the engine room with steam to such an extent, that it would have been quite serious had it not been smooth enough at the time to let the hatches be opened for the escape of the vapour and gas. This will take at least some days to repair, during which I trust the *Merrimac* will not make her appearance.

It is quite cold here, far south as we are notwithstanding and the water washing across the deck as it does all the time, does not add to the apparent warmth, however this I dont care for, if they would only give me a vessel that could steam and fight, but that would be expecting too much from contractors who have fortunes to make, and must I suppose use bad material to do so.

I will not be able to leave here for some days certainly, after my injuries are repaired I shall most likely go up the James River at least as far as Newport News, when if there is anything worth telling you I will write again, in the mean time with kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and many thanks for her Turkey the last of which Stimers and myself finished with much pleasure in the eating today, I am as always

Most sincerely yours
P. Drayton

Mr. Alexander Hamilton jr
New York.

Passaic Decr 5 62
Navy Yard Washington

My dear Hamilton

Your kind letter directed to Hampton roads was forwarded to me here, where I was sent for certain necessary repairs to the boilers, required

on account of injuries, owing as the people here say, to inadequate fastenings, but according to Ericsson caused by mere jealousy. If all is true that is said about this gentlemans indifference to money, I can only conclude from what I see, that like Fremont he is unfortunate in his friends and employés. I can scarcely say yet how long I am likely to be detained here opinions differ so much according to interests, but I should say at least ten days. As I have every reason to believe that my vessel was depended on to further and support certain movements intended, nothing could have been more unfortunate than the accidents that took place.

I have got stoves up and am endeavoring to get the vessel as comfortable as as she can be under the circumstances, but for the few days after the steam went down and before I could get stoves it was very much like living in a well such was the constant dripp dripp. . . .

Your most sincere friend
P. Drayton

I am going through just the same hurry here that I had thought to escape from on leaving New York.

U S S Passaic
Navy Yard Washington Decr 9, 62

My dear Hoyt

It seems pretty hard to get off one of the iron clads, and as regards my vessel we seem only to have changed the scene of operations, from one Navy Yard to another. The fact is that all of the work appears to have been carelessly and cheaply done, and as usual the interests of the country only considered so far as it accorded with that of the contractors. They say my boilers which gave way will be ready by the end of the week, although I rather doubt it. In the mean time finding it scarcely probable that I should be able long to stand the eternal wet and dampness of my cabin, without any means of heating, I have taken rooms in town at a kind of private house kept by a colored gent. named Wormley, who was quite well spoken of by Trollope and I think with some justice, as it is a comfortable establishment barring the slouchiness and want of order which seem inseparable from the race which just at present occupies so much of the public attention. We are overrun with senators and members who wont be kept out, no regulations being considered to apply to those high functionaries, and on Saturday we had the President Mr. Chase and some other important people, the former went everywhere crawled into places that Gerald or Henry would scarce have ventured in, and gave us a funny story or two in illustration of the incidents of the occasion. He looks more like a gentleman than I expected to see, from likenesses and descriptions. My breaking down was most unfortunate, as from what I can learn, there was some service marked out for me to perform at once, which has I suppose now been necessarily postponed. I dont think we shall ever get things right until a contractor or two is severely punished, as a reminder to his confreres, that the country as well as the individual has

rights, and is entitled to a little consideration. After the horrid weather we have had, to day is charming, and even comfortable at as bleak a place as this Navy Yard. Iron ships are not the most agreeable places of residence at any time or under any circumstances, but I am satisfied that snow and Northwesters are their special enemies and I should like to get South as quick as possible to be out of the reach of both.

The weather was not quite bad enough on my way round to enable me to judge of what is to be expected from my vessel in a gale, I only know that I should not have liked to take in more water than we did for about twenty hours, and if the steam was to give out in a heavy sea I think we should run some risk of either being asphyxiated or drowned which first I cannot yet decide. I think if Ericsson could only be persuaded to take a short cruise in one of his inventions he would learn a great deal more of them than he ever will theorizing about them in his room. Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hoyt and believe me

Yours most truly
P. Drayton

Mr L. M. Hoyt
New York

U S S Passaic
Navy Yard Washington Decr 16 62

My dear Hamilton

I have delayed from day to day answering your letter, in hope that I could tell you that the box which has given you so much trouble had come to hand, which it did this morning, after no doubt a most painful and eventful journey as it was shipped on the 10th. Expresses like many other things are fast becoming misnomers in our slouchy country. had I left here at the time that it was probable that I should have a few days back, I should have been likely to have spent a small fortune in expenses in this unfortunate box, the whole contents of which would scarcely sell for very much more than I have even now paid for its meanderings.

My vessel has been so carelessly finished, that just as fast as one break down is patched up, another shows itself, and my little practice here has shown me that had I entered into action with my gun carriages in the condition that they were, I should have regularly been hors de combat in a very little while. All this is most provoking, and I begin to rue the day when I got into the iron clad business, the discomforts I can stand, but not the want of efficiency which becomes more and more apparent every day. The fact is that scarcely any thing promised seems to have been performed and yet as it is almost too late to apply a remedy we must I suppose use them as they are, and yet with the reputation of the most wonderful and complete inventions of this or any other age, for myself I never have had as much worry in all my naval career put together, and what is worse can see nothing to relieve me from it in the future. However all this is between ourselves and not to go any further, especially to be kept from people with southern sympathies, for it would no doubt please Jeff to hear any-

thing unfavourable of a class of vessels which have already before leaving port even, frightened the whole Southern Seaboard. You I want to know the true state of the case, and understand that the Navy which has been kept always outside, is not responsible for delays which will no doubt excite greatly the displeasure of the community, and which perhaps Mr. E will shoulder off if possible. In the mean time I may be kept here a day or a week it being hardly possible to say which. Should you feel inclined to run on taking the chance I shall of course be delighted to see you and show you round the muddiest city I am sure in Christendom at least. Another freeze would be a mercy so that we could again travel on the earths surface. I have a room at Wormleys in "I" street a mulatto concern of some repute here but which would be lost at once if moved further north.. . .

Yours most affy
P. Drayton

We are filled up with members and senators all the time, the latter I think as a rule about the seediest set of individuals in appearance one often sees, they all believe in iron ships, and think all is up with the South now.

Mr Alex Hamilton Jr
New York

U. S. S. Passaic Dec 22 [1862].
Navy Yard Washington

My dear Hamilton

Don't lose heart, one would suppose from all that it said round us, that for the first time in the worlds history, it is our lot to exhibit unsuccessful generals, and a war in which our enemies were not wiped out right off. As for our poor president he is held responsible for all acts, although they seem to be settled for him in caucuses of governors and senators. The fact is that while our enemies have entirely dropped the states rights heresy, we are taking it up, and seem disposed to carry it out with a degree of earnestness, that would a year back have been looked upon as treason. Who can say where a revolution ends and in what. Halleck gave me last evening the official returns of casualties at Frederickburg 1152 killed, 1630 sufficiently wounded to be in hospital, and 500 prisoners. Rather different from what our fears and this infamous straggling lead us to believe at first, through the reports of the timid and disloyal. There is little doubt however that our armies melt away somewhat like a scottish clan, in hardship or ill luck, and will so long as it is considered to be remediable by a change in the cabinet or the field, and not by punishing desertion. The Prince de Joinvilles pamphlet gives us I think the key to a good many of these anomalies. Every morning my vessel is certainly to be ready on the next, things look now pretty favourable for Tuesday, in the meantime I run some risk of being frozen up at the Navy Yard. Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me

Yours most affy
P. Drayton

U. S. S. Passaic
Beaufort N C Jany 5 63

My dear Hoyt

I arrived here on the first after being knocked about first in a S W and afterwards a N W gale for three days, and not very pleasant ones they were as you may suppose in these infernal machines, which I always thought were only sea going vessels in the imagination of those persons who were interested that it should be believed so. At one time I must confess that it looked as if the *Passaic* would not last until daylight as the water had got up to within three inches of the fires and they once extinguished, of course we should have been soon after, fortunately however just in the nick of time the engineers managed to get the pumps fairly at work and brought the water once more to my relief and I suspect everyones else below the engine room floor, but we are safely through it this time so I wont say any more on the subject, and only hope we will have better luck next time. I cannot however but think from my short experience that Ericssons invention is about as much fitted to go to sea as a pleasure boat, and I only wish if he persists in a contrary opinion that he could be persuaded to try a short voyage to judge from dear experience.

Bankhead of the ill fated *Monitor* came in here a day or two since. How he and his crew was saved with the sea that was running at the time is a wonder to me, fortunately they just saved the moon, or it would have been out of the question, the boat which was principally instrumental in taking off the *Monitors* people, was supposed to have been lost on her last trip, but much to everyones satisfaction came in yesterday having been picked up by a schooner.

Of all the places I have seen this is the most dreary looking, sand pine trees and tumble down houses. Soldiers are pouring in en route to Newbern what to do I dont know, but I am sure they will do nothing. I dont see how we can assist them and that such a disorderly rabble will do anything alone I dont believe. Before this war takes a favourable turn on the Atlantic, we must discipline our army, punish desertion or as it is called straggling, and disabuse ourselves of the idea that numbers in themselves amount to much. I am satisfied that Burnside has now more men than he can use, and a hundred thousand more would only tend to break him down quicker, from the difficulty of feeding them. Still I am quite convinced that barring foreign interference we must in the end carry everything before us, blunder on as we may, and as I believe that slavery can only be destroyed slowly, I dont know that this dilatory way of proceeding is not the surest as it gives the people time for preparation, and will enable them to bear the shock which the idea of no niggers seems to have for some of them. I dont know exactly where next, but we shall certainly not be here much longer. When I can tell you where to direct to me I will write again in the mean time with kind remembrance to all in the house I am as always

Yours most sincerely
P Drayton

U S S Passaic
Beaufort N C Jany 12 1863

My dear Hamilton

I send by the *Abby Allen* a Schooner which is taking from here some prize goods the two books which Mrs. Hamilton was kind enough to lend me and both of which especially Elsie Venner I think quite good. I dont suppose she values them very much but as the opportunity offered I thought I might as well send them. As it is not certain whether the port will be New York or Philadelphia if the latter I have requested the officer in charge to leave the package with my brother who will send it on.

I got under way this morning intending to go to sea but as the wind came out to the S E thought it better to wait for a more favourable time, although I believe myself that there is no use in attempting at this season to secure good weather. It is all a chance, but as I was advised strongly to stay I stayed.

I have repaired all damages and consider myself again in pretty good condition. As to these vessels being fit for the sea that in my opinion is ridiculous, and indeed out of Ericssons clique I never yet found any seaman that thought differently. Of course if a man can make money by an invention his interest will soon make him really believe it without fault, and Ericsson does not err on the side of want of confidence. I will of course in my own interest do the best I can with his machine, and shall probably be disposed, if it carries me through safely to put up somewhere as a votive offering an iron clad in wax. However all the worry I have had with the confounded thing since does not equal that which I went through with the clique in New York while fitting out.

I am bound South where I should like to tell you, so that I could get a letter, but it is a secret of Polchinello, which everyone knows, but which I must not tell.

Worden is here in the *Montauk* like myself waiting for fine weather, he had good weather coming down, but managed to run ashore coming in, lay in a rather uncomfortable situation for about ten hours.

The constant use of my eyes by candle light will make me blind if I dont spare them so I must finish my letter, and with kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton believe me

Your friend
P. Drayton

Mr. Alexander Hamilton Jr
New York

U S S Passaic
Warsaw Sound Feby 11 63

My dear Hamilton

As I believe I told you before, I cannot write much now, as I find the continued use of my eyes by artificial light, is more than they can stand. This will account for my friends not hearing from me as often as I would desire. I suppose however that in your case the actual want of time, is quite as valid an excuse as mine of a deficiency of sunlight. The days are now, strange as it may

sound to you in New York becoming as they lengthen warm and it is evident, that before long I shall be able to manage very well both reading and writing on deck.

I have been here near two weeks, blockading the Wilmington river one of the outlets of Savannah, out of which the *Fingal* an iron clad has threatened to go, bound on some of those excursions of mischief, which to our cause have been a little too frequent lately. The fact is, that we have had it all our own way so long on the water, that everyone scouted at the enemy returning to seek us there even with iron against wood.

It is certainly a little singular that with all our boasted industry our rebel friends have actually got ahead of us in iron clads, which they build faster than we can, and which although perhaps not quite such wonderful sea goers as Ericsson claims for his, answer every purpose required of them, and completely at least neutralise ours, by the necessity they place us under, of a constant blockade of every place where one of them is, with one of ours, so that instead of having any for active operation, we have them absorbed in just such duty as I am doing here, and Warden at the Ogeechee. By the bye after all the capital that Ericsson has been making out of Rodgers reports, the vessel has broken down, and will require I am afraid a long time to put in order. I thought Rodgers was hurraing a little too soon, he certified to her being an elegant seaboat, before he had seen what a heavy head sea would do, and generally I think went off as they say half cocked, which gave E^n^ an occasion of writing a few of those wonderful ingenious letters of his, in which he invariably keeps back about half the truth, as he did in one that I saw in the H^d^ of 29, where he quotes the beam of his vessels 38 ft and draft 10½ ft, the first being with the side bulwarks which are immersed at least 3½ ft, 46 ft and the last seldom less than 11 ft 4 inches, and in my case more. However as I told some one the other day, he must be a bold man who would undertake to contradict in a New York Paper, the statements of a man the owner of five millions of Government contracts. So far the history of his vessels is as follows, *Passaic* a terrible smash up at the start, *Monitor* sunk, *Weehawken* smash up, [blank] I believe all right as she only arrived yesterday at Port Royal perhaps I may be wrong. This includes all that so far have attempted long voyages.

Wordens operations on a fort in the Ogeechee the other day, do not promise much either, for the wonderful xv inch gun, as the effect produced on the earth works, was pretty much what I told them it would be beforehand, that is very slight. There is little doubt in my mind, that with very considerable powers of endurance, the Monitors have only a very limited one of inflicting injury on either earth works or stone forts, and this arises from their few guns and the slowness with which the fire from these is delivered. The great advantage is after all the being able to pass forts without receiving much damage, but this is to a great degree neutralised where as at Charleston and along the whole Southern coast, the water is so shallow, as to permit stopping up the channels, and I for one begin to have serious doubts on the subject of the few iron clads at our disposal, being able to do much towards the reduction of my native city. This of course would not be an opinion agreeable to the publick, who have been stuffed to such a point of repletion, with wonderful stories of the power of the iron clads,

that like many people who ought to know better, it firmly believes that one is all sufficient to reduce any place on this continent, even in cases where there is actually not a sufficiency of water to permit of approaching. In view of my neighborhood to Savannah where there are not only plenty of troops and steamers to say nothing of the *Fingal* and it is said another ram, I have to be very much on the watch at night, that no *Galveston* dodge is attempted on myself or my companion a wooden gun boat and feel myself obliged before it is quite dark to shut up like a tortoise. This we can stand now, but have some doubts of its practicability in hot weather.

I had got so far when the Steamer from the Ogeechee en route to Port Royal arrives and as I dont want to detain her I must put off all the other interesting matters which I should probably have discussed. This I must say to you however that you may not go too far with the Seymourites and other traitors, not to the state because they may become the majority and even if not have a right to express their opinions, but to human progress. I honestly believe that should a dishonorable peace be brought about through their machinations they will before five years are over be looked upon as Arnolds. When you answer this which I take it for granted you will do tell me Syl's direction, and with kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton believe me always

Yours most sincerely
P Drayton

Get a small pamphlet "How a free people conduct war" by C. I. Stille of Philadelphia and read it.

U S S Passaic
Warsaw Sound Feby 18 63

My dear Hamilton

Please pay the postage on the accompanying two letters for which I send fifty cents. I felt myself in duty bound to thank Captain John for his kindness in getting me the brushes, and recollecting the Navy register, which however has not yet reached me, perhaps your man can trace it up through Adams express. The echo of the mishaps off Charleston, is just reaching us here, and I suppose the publick will pitch into Du Pont and the Navy Department, both of whom did their best with the means, the fault being, that on the day of the disaster there were only two real iron clads on the coast, and of these the *Montauk* was blockading the Ogeechee, which had she not done the *Nashville* would have been out, and I just ready for sea again having left that very day to come here to stop another rat hole, and not too soon, as the *Fingal* did make her appearance three days afterwards in the upper part of this river, and would have undoubtedly come down had she caught our wooden vessels alone. The papers have humbugged the Publick long enough about Charleston. It is the Richmond of the South, and not to be taken because we want it. I suppose that all the shot in my vessel and Wordens would scarcely amount to the number of guns that defend

it, to say nothing of every thing in the way of obstruction, from stones piles and torpedoes, that human ingenuity can devise, besides three iron plated vessels. It is all very well to flatter the mob of ignorant people, with the idea that they shall have what they want, but in the present case means are required which have not been supplied, and should an attempt on Charleston fail, and result, which in that case it must, in the loss from stranding or otherwise, of some of our iron clads good bye to the coast, for although we talk largely, I dont know where the vessels are to come from in the next six months to replace the present iron ones, except from the Southern ports where they can make people work. For the first time yet I begin to dispair a little of the future, and not on account of external foes, but for the enemy within us, composed of that large class of people, who dream that they can get peace, without national degradation under present circumstances, or rather pretend to so believe, for no one in his senses can think for an instant, that the South victorious, will be satisfied with anything short of the Missouri Compromise and all slave states, to say nothing of Washington and the reopening of the Slave trade. I am satisfied of one thing that no peace man will dare show his face in two months after it is made, and yet without a draft, there will be nothing else left, and a draft must come from above and not below. Jeff Davis and the Southern Oligarchy, have the necessary coercing force. Our republican form, which is so much decried for its tyranny has it not. however as I could very well write for an hour, without then saying anything that you would not already have heard, I will drop the subject.

Glad to hear they are so comfortable in Lafayette place, that you are so at 18 Washington Square I do not need to be told, my long residence there having very strongly impressed it on me, and I only wish I could honorably get back again. remember me kindly to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me

Yours most affy
P. Drayton

Mr A. Hamilton Jr
New York

P. S. ... You ask me if I get any exercise now not much as you might suppose, but still I keep in very good health, as do my officers and crew. I have not a sick person on board, nor has there been one for a great while, and were it not that to guard against surprise I am obliged to shut up the doors at night, and thus lose a good deal of fresh air, I should have nothing to complain of, although the sea even here goes over the deck when there is much wind, but that we are now accustomed to.

A poor little pilot boat from Savannah en route to Nassau ran ashore yesterday morning just before light and we had to take her, according to law although it seemed a shame to trouble such a mite of a thing she had however seventy two bales of cotton on board and the late papers.

Yours affy
P. Drayton

Mr Alex Hamilton Jr
New York

U. S. S. Passaic
Warsaw Sound Feby 28 63

My dear Hoyt

I have not I think written to you for some time and my excuse for it is that I find the dim day light or constant use of candles is so ruining my eyes as to warn me that I had better use them less.

I have been here just a month, for a short term of which we were kept on the qui vive, by all kinds of reports of the positive intention of the *Fingal* iron clad to come down, as well as the purpose to try to carry my vessel by boarding some dark night. As the *Fingal* has however after coming as far as the Thunderbolt batteries just above me, and where there are obstructions, has returned to Savannah, and the boarding if ever thought of, has now become an old story, we are back again to the usual stupid condition of things, where your enemy has obstructed every avenue of approach to him, and wont come to you. I really hope however that something decisive one way or the other will take place before the hot weather catches us, for although I can now shut up at night, and thus make things pretty safe against those favourite night attacks of the enemy, this will be impossible much later without a risk of suffocation. No doubt you are all looking with anxiety for the taking of Charleston, which has been so long ago promised that people must be a little tired of waiting as they have been so long doing for Richmond. In regard to the first I am glad to see a slight lowering in the tone of the papers, which with many much better informed, really believed that a couple of iron clads would carry, what I verily believe when the shallowness of the water, the obstructions of every possible kind used to make it shallower, and the number and size of the guns which defend every approach, is taken into consideration, to be almost the strongest place by sea in the world & not taking into consideration torpedoes, which are strewed about like autumn leaves, or iron clads which alone are three to our four, originally supposed to be abundant for our purpose, although there has been every where so much loose talking you find that when the time for action draws near, those responsible for success and failure, begin to look a little more seriously into the question, which is by no means a trifling one, for failure will probably lose us this coast, attended as it must be with the destruction of some of our iron clads, or what would be worse should they be stranded, a most likely thing, their getting into the hands of the enemy, two iron clads two months ago, would probably be equal to four now, and so it will go on every delay requiring a considerable increase of force, to produce the same result. Who is to blame for the non performance of contracts as even committees of Congress cannot or wont discover, it would not do for me to surmise, but I think the elder Napoleon, would have shot some one, as an example to encourage the rest at least. The fact is, that with the most inadequate means up to a short time ago, the Confeds had more iron clads afloat than we had, and if there had been only a very little of that enterprise existing, which our sympathisers with sesech give them, they might have cleared this coast out clean, before Worden and myself got here. As at Bull run however, the golden opportunity was allowed to pass, never I hope to return, an enormous advantage is still possessed though, which is the facility of concentrating on any one point a

superior force, or at least appearing when not expected, through means of this wonderful inland navigation, through the swamps and bayous, the entrances to which are defended by forts, and obstructions of every kind, the latter preventing a destruction of the fort, the former the removal of obstructions, which it is impossible to do under fire except by some of the patent modes supplied by torpedo men and other quacks, who are not to carry them out, but only to receive the money for it. The fact is a little singular, but almost all the planners of desperate enterprises, and particularly of those almost hopeless, never go to the war, where their great courage and indifference to risk would produce such an inspiring effect on the timid people who really do the fighting. All the on to Richmond class keep out of the smoke to see plainer perhaps. As we now however have about as many iron clads as can be collected before hot weather I for one hope that the attempt on Charleston will be made very soon, hit or miss.

I suppose like many others you are considerably worried at the growing dissensions among ourselves, where I think the true danger lies, for if only united and in earnest the South cant hold out I think for more than another year. of course no one except perhaps a few traitorous leaders know what is intended, for peace with the South at present not only means utter disgrace, but the loss of the territories, and as I believe that our people are as mad after cheap land as those of the South after cheap niggers I am sure that when it becomes apparent that the land can only be secured by force there will be a second Sumpter rising, with a more solid foundation for the enthusiasm, which being for something which appealing directly to the interest of the community may last longer, one ill result of the foolish talking of the North is to inspirit the South, as I saw from the conversation of some people whom I took the other day in a Schooner running the blockade with cotton, they seemed to think the republicans would be soon forced to give up the war, and we ought not to be surprised at this when we remember how the report of a few union people being found somewhere in the mountains is worked up by us.

Ogeechee river March 4 63

I had just finished the last sheet and should have continued further at that time had a steamer not broken in on me with orders to come here and try the fort which has already stood the *Montauk* on two occasions and which was an obstruction to reaching the *Nashville*. In pursuance of this instructions I came round the next day and with two other iron clads the *Patapsco* and *Nahant* went up on the morning of the 3d having the support of three Mortar Schooners at 4000 yards distant, which were about as much use as if they had been in New York and a lot of wooden gunboats which however I would not allow to come within range of the enemy's guns, I went as close as the water would permit twelve hundred yards, and commenced on the fort which was about as solidly built as it could be, earth being plenty and consequently nothing to prevent thick walls, there I remained firing away with only the intermission necessary to repair a few accidental disarrangements from half past eight until half past four when my men being completely fagged out and the ammunition nearly expended I left, satisfied that I might keep on as much longer without sufficiently destroying the work, to

make it untenable, and indeed I am convinced that as a rule, all the injury that is done to works of this description in the day may be repaired at night. As the principal object of the expedition had been obtained the day before I came, with destruction of the *Nashville* the Admiral thought another attack unadvisable, so I am going back to Port Royal to fix up for anything else that may be required. I had not a casualty on board, and I believe the only blood shed on our side, was from my face, which was struck by some pieces thrown up from the deck by one of the enemys shot, which came when I was outside directing the firing and which I had not observed in time to get behind the turret. Whether they were equally fortunate I cannot say, although we could scarcely have knocked the work as much out of shape as we did, without killing some one. Their battery was a pretty powerful one consisting of seven heavy guns and a mortar. The true defence of the river is however first the shallow water, which prevents nearing the fort, and then the obstructions across which prevent ascending the river, and which cannot be removed until the fire of the fort is silenced, and if you want to quiet the good people of New York against Warriors and Gloires, just recommend them to do just what has been done to every Southern river and harbor, stop up theirs in such a way, that the iron clads cant float over, and they can sleep in their beds as quietly as if there was no such thing as war, for although all non combatants think it the easiest thing in the world to pull up piles and other such encumbrances to a channel under fire, no one has yet been found any where at home or abroad, that can succeed in doing it, while shot are smashing your boats and killing your people, for it is not with these as with floating obstacles as those in the Mississippi were, and where you pull out a key or cut a chain a matter perhaps of a half an hour at the utmost, when the whole concern floats away and you are done with it. Why the good people in Savannah to let the *Fingal* out the other day, were not only obliged to use gunpowder to clear away, but to occupy a whole day and this when the people in fort Jackson were assisting instead of firing at them. However I cant write an essay on this subject, as my eyes wont stand it, and perhaps it would require almost that to make all of this plain, or to clear away one half of the rubbish that the Newspapers have been so steadily piling over the subject, one thing is very certain that opinions must be changing somewhere, for it was thought at one time generally that a couple of iron clads with Ericssons wonderful xv inch guns, could destroy Gibralter in a couple of hours, and even fort Darling seems to have produced very little effect in undeceiving. The fact is that from the start every one has been trying to fill the publick maw with something pleasant, from Mr Sewards three months to the immediate occupation of Richmond, Vicksburg and Charleston, the two former of which, will I think hold out until we discover that discipline is necessary to any army, and that when desertion is punished with a fine of twelve dollars they may change the generals every month and still do nothing, for although we are very fond of attributing great military successes to the genius of the chief actor, we will always find this quality somewhere connected with a wonderful severity of rule. This is not a pleasant view of the subject to take to our people, who prefer believing in an easier and more pleasant mode of doing things, where every one is to volunteer and not be coerced to stay when it becomes irksome, and even as the

Prince de J says expects to leave the field when he has done what is considered a days work.

As you may suppose although the human part of my vessel escaped, I am very far from being able to say the same of the wood and iron, although such a fuss is being made about anyone giving information on these subjects, that I cannot say more at present.

We have now six iron Clads lying together near me at Port Royal where I am finishing this letter, having got here last evening, enough to do something to attack Charleston at least, perhaps to take it, but certainly not without some of them being destroyed, if from no other cause through exposure to the heavy sea of the outer harbor, for which we are so little prepared. However with the kindest feelings towards ones neighbour, we are always trusting that he will be the recipient of the ill we of the good luck, in which there is great comfort. If this is rather more scrawly than usual, you will understand the reason when I tell you that I am now doing as I am most of the time obliged to, write on the back of a book whenever I can find light and be out of the wind or cold.

Tell Syl when you see her that I could not write by this opportunity, but will do so by the next, and with my kind remembrance to Mrs Hoyt Angelica and the children I am as alway

Yours most sincerely
P. Drayton
March 7 Port Royal

Mr L M Hoyt
103 West 14 St
New York

U. S. Passaic
Port Royal Mch 16 63

Mr Alexr Hamilton
New York.

My dear Hamilton

Since writing to you yesterday I have received your letter of the 4th inst. and although I sent one to you last evening, as there are one or two things to be answered in yours just received, I might as well do so by the *Florida,* which leaves this afternoon to bring down as I understand another iron clad, as the belief in the difficulties which are to be met with in Charleston harbor, seem at last to be forcing themselves on the Navy Department, and as such acts have more meaning than words, I take it for granted that the opinions which I have always expressed on this subject, will not be found to differ much from those which everyone is arriving at. One thing I think in addition has not received the attention it deserves, and that is the reported iron covered batteries in the harbor. Why batteries of this material may not be made as impregnable or more so than vessels, I cannot see, and yet these have been passed by with as little notice as for

some time were the obstructions. However I wont get again on Charleston, hoping that we shall very soon go in there, and decide for ourselves, whether the defences are manageable or not. I would of course like to see every precaution taken against failure, but would rather fail than not go in.

Your disposition of the $150 is all right, and the sum I am indebted to you besides, shall be at once forwarded and would be with this, but I am writing in a strange vessel, where I am acting as the President of a Court Martial, of all disgusting waste of time the most disgusting way of wasting it.

Dont be alarmed about Gold going down, it wont be long before you will see it at two hundred and even higher unless there is considerably more prospect of the end than anyone but the over sanguine people can now make out.

Do not either listen to those who try to have it thought that the enemy are getting weak or tired out or starved out. The war is to be influenced by fighting alone, although we take this in very unwillingly, and are constantly listening to quacks, well meaning and interested, who see some patent medicine way of curing more speedily than this appears to be doing, the publick ills.

Glad to hear such a good account of the children, and would very much like to see them, but am in for the war so far as depends on myself.

Perhaps if anything goes wrong or I am unsuccessful I may fall under suspicion as a South Carolinian and be temporarily shelved, which if a good conscience would support me to bear I could take with equanimity, for I doubt if H Greely occupies much higher ground than I do, and I almost think sometimes I might pass an examination with credit in the Tribune office.

From what I see around me, all of my contemporaries at least are being used up so fast by the anxieties and climate together, that if I should pass through the war supposing it to last much longer, I dont believe I would be worth much myself, unless I could get an occasional turn at the Gymnasium and that where exercise is practicable between times. This makes me take a very philosophic view of both Torpedoes and fever, the two most disagreeable agents that are likely to be brought to bear on us, and in meeting which there is neither glory or excitement. Another summer here will finish the breaking down, which the last one went so far towards accomplishing, and when health goes I am quite ready to follow. The publick only give credit for feats of arms, but the courage which is required for them, cannot compare with that which is needed to bear patiently, not only the thousand annoyances but the total absence of every thing that makes life pleasant and even worth living.

Dont suppose however that I am either despondent, gloomy or in ill health, as might be judged from the tone of the above remarks. I am very far from either. But still although willing and desirous to make every sacrifice, from the opportunity of doing which I would not be relieved if I could, I can perfectly appreciate the immense difference between a summer at Drayton house within reach of comfort and friends, and one spent here or even further South on the *Passaic*. Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and any one else whom you may class as your womankind, not knowing exactly who come under that head I cannot be more definite.

Yours affy
P Drayton

U. S. S. Passaic
Port Royal April 15 1863

My dear Hamilton

I hope you have all got over your disappointment at not getting Charleston, and can now take a fair view of the transaction. I as you may have gathered from my letters never thought very well of our chances, and since having obtained a nearer view of the defences, and learned how little our Iron Clads can stand against a continuous fire of heavy guns am quite satisfied that we might have lost our vessels had we got higher up but could not have increased the probability of success. We hear from all sides now that the affair is over and people are inclined to speak more freely, especially foreigners as for instance a french Consul in transitu, that the people of Charleston bothered their heads very little about the sea attack, but looked upon the serious one as likely to come by way of Stono or Edisto from the seventy thousand men supposed to be all ready for launching at them. No doubt Ericsson and party who have only looked at indefinite contracts, will pretend to disbelieve all our statements and try to throw the blame of failure on want of zeal or energy in the Comdg officers. If so it is a hopeless case, and difficult to better, as there is little doubt that the Department selected the best officers they could find for the purpose, and from what I know of the service, would not easily succeed in replacing the Captains who were my companions. Yet after the action they unanimously admitted, that a secon[d] attack would be hopeless, and that they now saw that the first one never could have had any end except failure. The real defences of Charleston may have been said not to have been reached, for the principal obstructions (piles I could see plenty of) were beyond Sumter, where were also the large torpedoes. There were beyond us three regular lines of defences from guns alone, enough from my experience, any one of them to have destroyed the iron Clads without any other agency, and each about equal to the first one which we engaged, namely first forts Johnson, Mount Pleasant and the Middle ground, second fort Pinckney and the forts on James Island. Third the batteries of the city itself and those about Wappoo, all of these had to be reduced before we could hold the city, which it is perfectly well understood from deserters, the army, for there are no civil inhabitants in it, were quite prepared to save us the trouble of burning by doing it themselves if occasion required.

Now as an illustration of what I have said in regard to the power of resistance belonging to the Monitors, I will quote the condition of my vessel, after about twenty minutes under Sumter, and all from the effect of heavy shot. The turret jammed, the XI inch gun carriage disabled, the side armor in one place nearly knocked off, and the Pilot house the very heart of the vessel, very much injured, and the top covering completely forced out of place, leaving an opening of three inches quite exposed, where if a shot had struck, it would have finished Captain Pilot helmsman and the whole steerage apparatus.

Four or five of our small number of vessels were also more or less disabled one having for a single item lost sixty bolts out of the Turret, and Pilothouse, owing perhaps to bad iron. In view of this I think I may say with safety, that an hour more would pretty much have finished the fleet, and have turned into the

great disaster of the war what was merely a repulse, The people may grumble and find fault as much as they please, but if it is persisted to run our vessels whether iron or wood, against strong batteries and well protected, either as here by obstructions, and torpedoes, in the Mississippi by being placed on high bluffs, we shall merely continue to lose both material and prestige. Farragut like Du Pont is an instance of the ill effects of publick impatience and ignorance, coercing as it has done from the first our military leaders. I told our admiral the day before the attack, that I did not believe we could do anything that it would make it worth while running the risk of some of our iron clads getting into the enemy's hands. But yet nothing was more certain than that the attempt must be made, or there would be a storm that no one could breast, and even failure and defeat would be better than giving up what had been so much talked of. We understood from deserters, that wherever a passage is open, there are spread strong nets of rope to catch our propellers, perhaps one of the surest and easiest modes of crippling steamers that can be thought of. In conclusion all I have to say is, that if persons can be found who believe that Charleston is to be taken by sea attack just send them down here to attempt it, instead of vaporing about bar rooms and political meetings, and they may have if they choose twenty instead of eight iron Clads, for taking away the iron Sides which was good for nothing, that was our number, and the real ones although having considerable endurance, with only two guns which no one has yet been able to fire in action for a continuance, oftener than once in seven or eight minutes, are not able to reduce a work of any size, and at least here cannot run by.

You may ask them what is the use of the iron clads? Why to protect our own depots, and render in consequence the blockade possible and the army posts tenable. Without us Port Royal could not be held a day, and although I believe that one real victory does more to end the war than the mere occupation of the whole sea coast, still there is little doubt, that the former must have its effect, although in a more limited degree, and it would be a great gain to the enemy, could we be driven away from the places now held. As to any victories in the present condition of our army I dont look for them. We must first get some discipline. and our military institution must be governed by military not civil law. It is impossible to keep an army together where desertion the great cause of demoralization is punished like playing truant. So far as I can see there is no cohesion of parts, the officer says the soldier is insubordinate, the soldier the officer is ignorant, and both are right from what I see and hear. I never doubted before, I begin to now. The South is the bundle we the sticks, twice as many to be sure but still separate ones. We took prisoner the other day on Edisto Island a picket of seven young men, none over twenty, and as two of them are the nephews of Mr. Seabrook the only man besides my brother I ever cared for in the state, I went to see them. I found that six of them are the sons of very rich men. They are enlisted for the war overflowing with zeal, talk of their officers with almost veneration, evidently think their army invincible and are quite satisfied to be common soldiers. With us it is considered great patriotism if the same class are found as officers. Like all the deserters and prisoners I see they agree that luxuries are wanting, but that there is plenty of corn and bacon,

powder and ball. By the bye you will find in the March Atlantic Magazine "Pericles and President Lincoln" perhaps you may pick it to pieces, but it strikes one as rather an ingenious parallel, that between North and South Athens and Sparta, of course however I do not apply this to the two men. And I somewhat differ from the writer in laying so much on the generals, believing as I do, that the fault is in the soldier, who unfortunately having a vote, is permitted a degree of individual latitude, which makes our army a kind of mob. One thing at least we learn from history, first that discipline carries everything down before it, and second that the era of a nations great military renown, has always been marked by an unusual severity of discipline. Of course we must find a scapegoat and the general is a safer one than the soldier. I believe ours to be quite as good as those of the enemy, but there he has the advantage of commanding a real army. The young men I speak of above it seems had with them four or five servants, these were close to our vessels, and yet never attempted to run away. This indifference to liberty almost makes one despair of the negro, he seems to belong to the only race known to the world that can remain contentedly enslaved.

We just got away from Charleston in time, for the gale that came on the day after would certainly have carried some of us with our one small anchor ashore, if we had not been already asphyxiated by living so long without air, which is the case when the hatches are closed, to a very great extent. Interested people may say what they please, but more helpless vessels than ours away from smooth water and good anchorage can scarcely be found. We must after all have a class of sea goers like other people, particularly as no one dares cast loose a gun when there is the least roll of the sea.

However I wont inflict on you, any more of my grumbling, if you see everything couleur de Rose it may be very easy to keep in a good humor, as I dont, I cant. I should only like to have an hours talk with you, for writing I do hate.

Kind remembrance to Mrs Hamilton and believe me always

Yours affy
P. Drayton

I see in a paper of the 11th that we were three thousand yards off, I was certainly at one time not six hundred, but wherever I was, had I been much nearer there is no doubt as I can prove easily, that the shot would have passed through my Pilothouse and side armor, which they nearly did as it was.

Some of the army officers talked after the attack of a landing on Morris Island. I have not time to enter into it, but anything more ridiculous or which must so certainly have ended in the entire destruction of the force can scarcely be conceived. Perhaps people at the North however may believe in it as in so many other brags.

Mr Alex Hamilton Jr
New York

Ordnance Office,
U. S. Navy Yard, New York.

July 19 63

My dear Hoyt

As I tell Syl my note paper is not got up quite as elegantly as hers, but as I cant lay my hand on any other at the moment, and your establishment is not quite so over elegant as those lower down I will venture to use it.

This is Sunday, but there is no sunday now, the division of time seems lost sight of, and even that of night and day is not much regarded.

We have been having a pretty lively time as you can judge from the papers during the last week, and as the mob which seems to be composed of a class of men as much opposed to the Union as if it was raised in Richmond, has been threatening to burn all government property wherever found, and has been particularly indignant because we would not allow our men to quit work, we have had to guard the Navy Yard from attacks which have been threatened, and for the last few days, from the appearance of things you would have almost supposed yourself somewhere within reach of a Southern raid. As it is pretty well known however, that the regular forces not being lead by persons who want votes fire low, I dont think we shall be disturbed. All this condition of things however together with the fitting out of vessels for the protection of property on the North & East rivers, and the numerous applications for cannon, muskets, and shells to defend everything and everyone have kept me as it has everyone else on the move early and late.

All this is I hope now over, nor do I believe that there will be a return. Although the riot was not met with the vigor it should have been at first, still a great many persons have been killed, and boast as it may I think the mob of thieves and secessionists has had enough for the present, nor do I believe that the prosecution of the draft, will cause any disturbance of the least consequence. The leading democrats have undoubtedly raised a storm that will teach them prudence for a time, and perhaps will remind them that the end of all mobs is simply plunder, whatever may be the beginning. That Wood and party have rather burned their fingers and given the administration infinitely more power than it had before, I both hope and believe, and after all, the end of this may be good.

The most extraordinary part of it though is, that in this part of the nineteenth century any civilized city could contain such a population as has shown itself itself in New York. According to the Archbishops nomenclature, what must the gentlemen be, who are below his lambs. What a perfect demagogue the old scamp has shown himself, I believe he would keep up the riot if he could.

As for the Irish women, eye witnesses say that their treatment of the bodies of the poor darkies, has its only parallel in the behavior of the Marseilles fish women of the French revolution....

Mr & Mrs Hamilton went up to Dobbs ferry yesterday, where we have sent a gunboat to protect that part of the river. I have seen very little of them during the last week, having been obliged to remain day and night in the Navy Yard.

Kind remembrance to Mrs Hoyt

Yours most sincerely

P. Drayton

Mr L. M. Hoyt
Staatsburg N. Y.

Navy Yard New York
Augt 23 63

My dear Mrs Hoyt

I had intended to have taken the Mary Powell yesterday afternoon, and afternoon, and after a quiet trip on the river, found my way over from Poughkeepsie, all of my arrangements were made, when at half past one I received such a pile of letters orders and telegraphs, all requiring immediate attention, that I at once gave up, and settled myself down to work until near dark.

When Charleston is taken we may have some rest here, but until then, (and I am by no means one of those who think its fall immediate,) such a thing cannot be looked for.

As usual Sunday is no holy day and I am as has been the case with rare exceptions busily employed in my office. Nor do I consider it any desecration of the day to employ it in the furtherance of a war, which so far as our limited powers of comprehension goes, is undoubtedly waged for everything that has been held sacred by the best part of the human race from all time.

It is so hot to day that I dont know but that I am fortunate in having been kept in town, where at least I can keep quiet.

Mr & Mrs Hamilton left town on Thursday and I think were to stop at your house on their return from Columbia County. If they have not done so I will deliver your message. I have not yet heard from Wise but he will be here during the week and I will then go up to Cold Spring with him and further up the river if we can find time. Farragut will probably be of our party as I said before he is not to be depended on at present. To keep him in mind and that when you next meet you may be able to recognize him I send you his carte de visite, which is very good, the one with the cap however the most agreeable.

Sorry to hear that Mr Hoyt has not entirely regained his health and strength, the latter not an easy thing to do for any one, in this weather. We have a regular encampment in Washington Square of a Massac regiment, which if it does nothing else will entirely finish the grass there. The first morning after its arrival, I was waked up by the réveillé, and thought for a little while I was on board ship. Since the second morning however it has not disturbed me, and I have little doubt they might drum away without my noticing it until my regular waking hour was reached.

Kind remembrance to Mr Hoyt and believe me
Sincerely your friend
P. Drayton

Mrs L. M. Hoyt
Staatsburg
N. Y.

Navy Yard New York
Decr 5 1863

My dear Hoyt

Farragut a few days ago asked me to go out with him as Fleet Captain. Although quite comfortable here and very much interested in my duties hard as

they are, still I cannot help feeling that in time of war an officers place is afloat and I accepted.

Today I received orders to hold myself in readiness to leave as soon as an officer could be sent to relieve me, and I suppose I shall sail in the *Hartford* in about two weeks, for the Gulf.

Should Mrs Hoyt and yourself not come to town before my departure I will come up to bid you good bye.

Yours most truly
P. Drayton

Mr L. M. Hoyt
Staatsburg
N York

Hartford *Key West*
Jany 13 64

My dear Hamilton

We arrived here yesterday morning after a very good run, and except for the first two days when it was cold and blowy, have had fine weather, and are at present suffering from heat and mosquitoes, a thing perhaps difficult for you to realize in New York at this season.

This is rather a dreary residence I should suppose, a sand bank varied with cocoa nut and a few other trees of the tropics, but the soil so light and sandy, as to be almost unfit for gardening purposes, and for all such products as the ordinary table vegetables your city affords their only supply, and now that wrecking is almost a lost art, owing to the breaking up of the gulf trade, I suppose the population would starve, were it not for the employment given it by Navy and Army.

There are plenty of niggers here and some Sesech, the latter however I understand are rather dying out, for I am happy to say that Slavery has been wiped out here, and without it, the Sesech element having nothing to live on soon becomes unimportant, and must die of inanition. There are a few young ladies they say, who still shut up their prayer books at the prayer for the President, but as their foolish behaviour simply has excited ridicule, it seems by all accounts to be on the reform.

Blockade runing it is thought here is done up. The officers tell me that the venture pays now so badly, as to have completely disheartened the persons engaged in it. Every steamer known to have been in the trade has been taken, and the business is now reduced almost entirely to small schooners, and these stories which get into the opposition papers, of the number of entries into Wilmington and Mobile are sheer fabrications, to injure the administrations got up by its enemies.

Palmer and I are all right my trouble having been so far merely from an excess of apetite, which I do not like to give way to on ship board, where there is so little opportunity for exercise. Farragut hurt his foot a little before leaving New York, and has been quite lame. The symptoms are strong however of

gout, which he however wont listen to, but which as he prides himself on never drinking water, looks to me very probable.

He is very temperate, confining himself to Bordeaux at dinner but I suppose that in sufficient quantities may do the business.

Being so near Havana, cigars are as you may suppose plenty, and I actually smoked one myself yesterday after a dinner on shore, and did not find that it disagreed with me, so perhaps I may some of these days take up again the vile habit. We go off for Pensacola in a couple of hours, and from there most likely to New Orleans touching off Mobile where there are rumors of iron clads intending to come out.

I have not time to write to any one else, so must get you to give my love to all at 56

Remember me also kindly to Mrs. Hamilton and every one in your house, and believe me always.

Most faithfully yours
P. Drayton

Mr. Alexander Hamilton Jr
New York.

Flag Ship Hartford
New Orleans Jany 23 64

My dear Hamilton

We arrived here yesterday having stopped after leaving Key West for two days at Pensacola (the Navy Yard at which place having passed through the hands of the rebels, reminds one very much of the ruins of Pompei), and then remaining for the same time off Mobile with the blockading Squadron, which we found a good deal exercized, in consequence of reliable information, that the enemy's iron clads to the number of four, were ready and determined to come out on them. Although the time for this has not yet quite come, there is little doubt that it will be very soon, if we do not take the initiative, by going in ourselves with some of the same class of vessel, it is not easy to do at present, as there are none here, Charleston seeming so completely to have engrossed the attention of the Department, as to drive out of memory all other places. This is a pity, as I think two Monitors at present could most likely take Mobile bay, and cause the fall of the forts, which virtually wipes out the city, while a little later many more might fail in the same work. I intended to write you a long letter but find it impossible as there is a vessel just about starting North and I am so interrupted as to prevent my doing anything for more than a few minutes at a time, so give my love to Syl and tell her if she does not hear from me by this opportunity what the reason is.

Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me
Yours most sincerely
P. Drayton

Mr. A. Hamilton Jr
New York.

Flagship Hartford
Western Gulf Blockading Squadron.
Jany 26 1894

My dear Hamilton

Your letter of the 14th reached me yesterday, and I am much obliged to you for your attention to my affairs....

I am going through the old story of the Ordnance, so busy from morning to night as to have no enjoyment in life, and I shall really not be sorry for a little outside work, merely to give me a continuance of the rest I had a taste of coming down. There are in the Squadron more than sixty vessels, and the reports applications, regulations &c constantly pouring in from them, are without end, to say nothing of the personal applications for everything under the sun from morning to night. Wyckham Hoffman is here, on Franklin's staff, looking very well, and pleased with his duty and full of zeal. I dont know why it is that most of the army officers seem to rather improve under their hardships, while the Navy ones break down and look care worn and haggered without an exception, and although little known North from the unimportance of the persons, I have been surprised to learn how many of the Masters and Ensigns have died during the last summer from Yellow fever, particularly in the small vessels.

The weather has been most beautiful since our arrival, only a little too hot at midday,

28th I went last night to a promenade concert got up under the Superintendence of Banks and staff, by way of amusing the Creoles, and making it to their interest to come in. Banks thinks pan et circences the plan with this lighthearted people. I think as I tell them, that the taking of Galveston and Mobile, will make a stronger diversion in our favor, than all the opera singers and balls that could be supplied in the next ten years.

All that outer exhibition of ill feeling among the women here has ceased, and a very large number are at least polite, and many really disposed to be civil.

It is evident to me that nothing but the fear of their friends coming again into possession, prevents a complete give in.

Although there were a good many of the Creole population at Banks concert, the only persons belonging to la creme were the wife of Norman Jackson, whom you may remember in New York, and a young lady friend. The first is very pretty, and just sesech enough to be amusing. I dine there to day with the Admiral. Palmer seems to have the most extensive acquaintance here, he leaves us to day to take command of the Pensacola and remains in charge of the station at this place, during the absence of the Admiral. This seems to suit him very well although I should not like it myself.

In the meantime until some arrangement can be made I shall have I suppose to command this ship in addition to my other duties, were it not that I do not like to desert the Admiral so soon I would I think vacate my staff appointment and take the other for good.

We shall get away from here in a very few days to look around at the various squadrons. Nothing can be done at Mobile without ships, and as I said before I dont see where they are to come from until Charleston is taken, which will be

some time yet, for although I believe that the tremendous efforts of the enemy will break them down before long, still it must for a time cause our armies to be every where outnumbered, and prevent a forward advance by Gilmore.

While they are exerting every nerve, we seem to be again getting into that extraordinary delusion that the war is over while the two largest armies of the rebs are untouched. And until they are beaten what nonsense it is to talk about union movements in our favor. The largest and surest union party at the South is the black one, three millions strong, and yet what can they do until we free them. It is the same with the others. The only power in the confederacy consists of Bragg and Lee's army, and I suspect that Jeff Davis troubles himself very little about what the remainder of the population think. Break these down and then we will have perhaps a public opinion in our favour until then none.

There are about twenty thousand black soldiers in this department, who are spoken well of. As regards the laborers I can learn little but am inclined to think that as yet they do not work very energetically or willingly, which we ought not to be surprised at as their idea of liberty is no work.

I am scribbling this off before breakfast for afterwards there is no chance and as a vessel goes in the morning I want to have it ready New Orleans is really beginning to look a little lively along the wharves and there are regular lines of steamers again running. Your friend Franklin has his headquarters here and I see him almost every day. Indeed almost all of the generals seem to prefer the city I should judge from the number here.

I hope Mrs. Hamilton's hard work, will lead to great results, and that the New York fair will astonish the country by its wonderful success, and the enormous sums raised for our sick and wounded, and with you I have little doubt, that when the truth comes to be known, as unfortunately it seldom does however, that the principal part of this will have been due to Mrs. Hamilton's energy and system. For the first time since our arrival the weather has at length changed and is no longer pleasant, but until today I have never seen anything more beautiful than it has been.

We have here the last new thing in steam tugs, a small one manufactured out of the launch of the *Mississippi* (the vessel which was burned at Vicksburg,) and which is now the admirals barge, so that instead of pulling against this terrible current, we are whisked about with the utmost rapidity and least trouble to Jack.

Give my kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and all in the house. If Hoyt is in your neighborhood tell him I will write to him soon and believe me

Yours most sincerely
P. Drayton

Mr. A. Hamilton Jr
New York.

We have Mercer's house as our headquarters on shore, and very comfortable ones they are, but Farragut thinks it not worth while leaving the *Hartford* for the short time we will be here. Direct my letters simply W. G. B. Squadron New Orleans, Fleet Capt.

HARTFORD
FLAG-SHIP: WESTERN GULF BLOCKADING SQUADRON
Off Pensacola
Feby 14 1864

MY DEAR HAMILTON

Although I have got away from New Orleans it does not seem that I have much less to do, particularly as in addition to my previous duties I have now those connected with the command of this ship. I do not however complain of work, which if it does nothing else prevents ennui in situations, where but for it, it might occasionally enter. I would though like a little more time not only to write to my friends, but to read a little German occasionally. The Admiral is at present quite under the weather as sailors express it. He took a ride on horseback with the general commanding and myself, and has not since been right, for although a most active man for his age, that age is over sixty, and as he will drink wine he has to be a little careful.

I send you four Mobile papers which will I think interest Mrs. Hamilton and yourself. If looked into carefully a vast deal can be learned from them, for instance the only blockade runner mentioned as coming in has provisions as part of her cargo. Deserters and refugees come in almost every day, which enables us to procure a good deal of information. They all agree that blockade running is almost done up, but two vessels have gone into Mobile in six weeks and none out, and a vessel trying Charleston, shows how closely Wilmington must be leaguered. Our friends the rams we understand declare that they are going to finish us before long, but we dont believe it. Still an iron ship or two would make things safer.

We leave here tomorrow to superintend some little operations in Mississippi Sound, and as the vessel is only waiting for this to go to New Orleans with the mail, I must finish. The weather is delightful, fire a thing not needed and no rain for weeks past. Of course this cant go on forever.

Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and all in the house and believe me

Yours most faithfully
P. DRAYTON

Mr. A. HAMILTON Jr.
New York

HARTFORD FLAG-SHIP: WESTERN GULF BLOCKADING SQUADRON
Off Ship Island
Feby 19 1864

MY DEAR HAMILTON

I received yesterday yours of the 2d and hope that you have since received mine from New Orleans...

We got in here yesterday after passing a day at the Mobile blockades and as soon as a tremendous Norther which is now blowing shall cease I will go in one of the small vessels inside of Mississippi Sound to examine the inside defences

of Mobile bay, and perhaps shell them a little by way of seeing what they are made of. I go with the Admiral of course. We are now having the second cold spell of the winter and actually yesterday had a few flakes of snow. People call it cold but I think it is just nice and bracing. They tell me that the army transport which takes this is under way so I have no time to talk of other matters but will leave them for another occasion.

Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and I hope that her and your proposed five hundred thousand will be produced by the fair. Am glad to learn of the pleasant week you spent with Hoyt and feel that I could have enjoyed much being with you, although I would after all rather keep to work and give up amusement until the war is over, when those who see it through can take their fun all in a lump.

I agree with you in your fears of Syl's principles from a Northern trip, for in this as in some other cases extremes meet, and Canada seems almost as bad as S. Carolina. I suppose she will come back like so many others of our republican nation, more than ever convinced that ours is not a country for a gentleman to live in, only one to enable that class to make money out of to keep up its gentility. I am very sorry to hear of Mrs. L———'s illness but trust that it is all over and that she is in her usual good health again,

The Admiral is still suffering from a little rheumatism or gout, but will I trust be well enough to suffer no inconvenience from the little roughing it which he must go through if he goes up the Sound in one of our smaller vessels. I like many other water drinkers, although not claiming the robustness of the class who live generously, at least never seem to get below the point of medium good health, which has been my condition since leaving you.

About half Farragut's letters are for autographs and what is I think a little impudent Cartes de Visite, the latter being an article which costs money and can be bought currently. For a second time remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and all in the house and believe me Yours faithfully

P. Drayton

Mr. Alexander Hamilton
New York.

Flag Ship Hartford
Ship Island Mch 2 1864

My dear Hamilton

I came across the enclosed shark story a few days ago, and recollecting your curiosity about the matter send it to you, No doubt Wheleright or any other person connected with the *California* could have the matter placed beyond doubt and thus settle a question which has so long exercised the Club.

I have been for a week with Farragut at Grants Pass one of the upper entrances into Mobile bay, where with five bomb vessels we have been trying to drive the enemy out of a strong earth fort or at least to do what would serve the purpose of making a diversion in favor of Sherman in North Alabama. The

water was so shallow that two miles was as near as the lightest vessel could approach so that I suspect no great harm was done on either side. They threw a good many shot over us, but only a very few hit, and they did no great harm only one man being hurt and the vessels little injured. Yesterday while waiting for a fresh supply of ammunition, the celebrated iron clad with which we have so long been threatened made her appearance in Mobile bay. and as it is said that she accompanied by her consorts, is to make a raid on us the Admiral hurried off to join the Mobile fleet, where we should be now, were it not that it is blowing such a gale of wind, as to make it very disagreeable outside for an ordinary vessel and impossible for an iron clad such as the *Tennessee* to live long. It is a great pity that a few troops and an iron clad or so could not have been had ere this, to enable us to take the forts of Mobile bay. It will of course become more difficult the longer delayed, but we always seem to prefer that the enemy should be quite ready before attacking him. As a Norther is blowing it is quite cold again comparatively, but I suspect this will be the last of the winter and the complaints for the future will arise from other causes than too much heat. Until something is settled about the enemy's iron clads I shall scarcely be again in port except to coal, as the *Hartford* must take her place on that most wearisome and thankless duty of blockading. All engaged in it complaining that they get no sleep and never have their clothes off, but so long as the heavens dont fall I will manage to have a fair share of the first, at least, or it will be for the first time this war that I have failed, and I have been in places where attack at night was much more likely to take place than will be the case off Mobile.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Hamilton and all in the house. Heaven an[d] earth is being moved in its favor* I should judge from the applications to the Admiral for his autograph and photograph, like a prudent man he keeps none of the latter on hand. Even I do not entirely escape, and a few days since received a very polite note from Mrs. General McClellan requesting a signed Carte de visite, which having, I of course sent, telling her that although I could not well see how the likeness of a person so little known as myself could aid in the very laudable object she had in view, still I could not otherwise than feel glad at an opportunity being offered me, of not only appearing in good company but at the same time of obliging the wife of Genl McClellan.

Ever since I have commenced this I have been interrupted every few minutes to explain or listen to something, as we are getting off papers and letters by the mail boat, for all parts of the coast and Washington, this must account for my at times not appearing to know exactly what I was writing about. Much to my relief three days since the Secretary whom I got for the Admiral, to replace his drunken one absent without leave arrived and being thorough at his business, he is already getting things in admirable order, and has relieved me from a great deal of work which no more belonged to me than to the ships cook, but which I had to do or it would not have been done at all....

Yours most sincerely
P. Drayton

Mr. Alexander Hamilton jr.
New York

* The Sanitary fair—footnote by Drayton

Flag Ship Hartford
Pensacola March 15 1864

My dear Hamilton

Radford has just written to say that I had left my Commission with him which I must confess to have entirely forgotten. That this may not occur again I have asked him to send it to you. Will you put it in my box.

I also send you by an opportunity that offers a couple of hundred cigars. If you like either description I can get you a reasonable amount, or if there is any particular brand which you have a fancy for I can send over to Havana for them. This will at least be cheaper and if you will persist in that horrid habit of smoking dont ruin both health and fortune at the same time. As I wrote only a few days since I dont think of anything else to tell you. We have been expecting to go to sea every day, but something always occurs to detain us. The ram *Tennessee* which we thought we saw the other day in Mobile bay is said to be still on the Dog river bar near the city, so she cant try anything against us just yet. There has however one of the torpedo vessels been seen lately near fort Morgan so I suppose an attempt will be made to treat us like the *Housatonic*.

Judging from the tone of the Mobile papers which we get quite frequently the Confederacy is in much better spirits lately, owing first to their success in Florida and elsewhere and next to the confidence given by the energetic action of their Congress which whether politic or not in the future for the moment gives them soldiers and hope.

We have one of the most striking characters one often meets, here on shore in the person of a Genl Asboth, a Hungarian refugee and old companion of Kossuth, he is a Brigadier and commands this post & distinguished himself much at Pea ridge where he commanded a division, His appearance is very much that of Don Quixote and he is a thorough soldier and courtier, a desperate admirer of horses and dogs and is always accompanied on all his campaigns by about half a dozen of the bigest specimens of the latter one often sees. He dined the Admiral and self the other day, and the first dish was chocolate soup, nothing more or less than such chocolate as you drink served in a tureen and ladled out like soup. I have seen a good many strange customs but both the Admiral and self agreed that this was beyond both of our experiences.

Kind remembrances to Mrs. Hamilton and all in the house and believe me

Yours affy
P. Drayton

Mr. A. Hamilton jr
Jauncey Court
New York.

In this age of autographs Asboths signature is as fine a specimen as one often sees, and it is only a pity that this being the case, the writer is not more famous to give it the value so fine a specimen of caligraphy deserves. I enclose one for Mrs. Hamilton or any of her friends who value such things, also one of Porters to contrast

Flag Ship Hartford
Western Gulf Blockading Squadron
Pensacola March 20 1864

My dear Hamilton

... We are still here, the Admiral having very sensibly I think decided that so long as the enemy's head iron clad sticks in the mud at Mobile, he is near enough to that place for all useful purposes at Pensacola, where we communicate with the blockade in four hours. I think that it is a great pity that instead of sending off all the troops to the Red river, enough had not been detained to let us pitch into the Mobile forts and have it over one way or the other without so much delay. The heart and vitals of the Confederacy, are this side, not the other side of the Mississippi, but I suppose that politics enters into the movement somewhat of our armies, and not military motives alone as I think should be the case. By the number of deserters and refugees who come into our lines, I judge that there is a great dissatisfaction existing among the Rebs (not Confeds as I called them improperly before as you will see from the enclosed circular) but still there are those two big armies always looming up, and which must be beaten well before the non military element dare show its hands beyond our protection.

The Admiral is getting over his rheumatism or horse ride or whatever it may be, and desires to be remembered to Mrs. Hamilton and yourself. I am remarkably well myself, and am only troubled for fear I should be going to grow fat, as I find that I weigh a hundred and fifty five pounds whereas I never recollect any previous weight beyond fifty two.

I have a tremendous bundle of papers to get off by this mail so will now finish this private one, and with kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and all in no. 18 I remain

Yours faithfully
P. Drayton

P. S. If you are fond of receiving letters you ought to open a correspondence with Jenkins, in the last five days I must have received from him at various times what would make a sizeable book, and all so badly written that I dont read more than about one half,. Poor fellow he seems to have plenty of idle time on the blockade and spends some of it in that way.

No. 2 If my brother sends you any more gold checks keep the specie.

P. D.

New Orleans
U. S. S. Tennessee Apl 8 1864

My dear Hamilton

The Admiral found it necessary to come round here for a few days and perhaps may be obliged to visit Texas, and as it is important that I should be with him, keeping as I do the key to the squadron business, I left my vessel in charge of the first Lieutenant at Pensacola, and took passage with him in the

Tennessee, one of the old passenger steamers that formerly ran on our coast, and which was taken in attempting to run the blockade of Mobile about a year ago. A most comfortable vessel she is too, and would be the perfection of a man of war, if she was only a tenth part as fit to fight as her quarters are large and airy. Both the Admiral and self have rooms that would not be considered small; in a house, and then compared with the execrable rolling and pitching of our screw sloops is as steady in rough weather as a church, which is an expression among sailors for the most perfect stability, at least physically considered.

I received a letter from you as I was leaving my ship, telling me that you were just about getting out again after an attack of illness. I am glad to hear that you are well again, but cannot conceive how you manage to get sick with all the comforts of home about you and Mrs. Hamilton to look out for them and you. It must be done in the mere spirit of opposition and if that is the case you deserve a little inconvenience, which has I hope however been only sufficient to deter you from committing the same fault a second time.

Something I have frequently intended to ask you, just now strikes me, Once or twice I have heard the Admiral allude to a series of resolutions, passed by the city councils of New York, in his honor; and which it was said in the papers, were to be engrossed and presented to him, Ask some alderman friend for me, what became of them, as I have a curiosity to know, and would like to inform the Admiral who also I think has something the same feeling about them.

The Account Current you speak of in your letter I acknowledged in my last, and a very satisfactory paper it was.

This city although not as gay as when Banks and the army were present, is still very much of a vanity fair, and the Admiral who I think at least enjoys its life and dissipations as much as any one, never tires of abusing it for the demoralization it produces on the fleet. As for him I cant keep him on board in the evening and he takes me to many places I would be very glad to keep out of. We went last evening to a party at Mrs. Banks', where there were plenty of nice people, but few if any Creoles among them. She is beautifully lodged in what the natives call a stolen house, but worth committing a slight sin to obtain, and surrounded as it is now with orange blossoms and all kind of sweet smelling plants, is the perfection of southern elegance and comfort. They have not been able to get up a Sanitary exactly but are to have on the 12th some Tableaux under the patronage of Mrs. Banks and a Mrs. ———— of New York, rather a highfligher, although not of the crême at home. She is however rather a nice person, and as her husband is said to be quite rich, no one can understand her intention of spending the summer here, notwithstanding the possession of one of the finest houses in the city, for the time being. The ready answer of the residents or of those above suspicion however in all such cases is, that they are after cotton, or as it is expressed belong to the cotton stealing association, most of the bags seized being marked C. S. A. It seems that it was generally thought that this late expedition up the Red River, was to have yielded largely in the staple, but unfortunately Banks occupied with the political organization of this state, delayed his departure so much, that Porter got ahead, and it is said has cleared out every available bale. It is amusing to listen to the reports con-

stantly being circulated here by the sesech element. For three days there were no arrivals from the Red river, and by the end of that time *authentic* information was received, first that Taylor had got between our forces, next had taken Alexandria and on the third day had in his possession Genl Banks all his staff and five thousand prisoners. So that on going to Mrs. Banks last evening I was very happy to see the Chief Quartermaster who had been particularly mentioned as one of the unfortunates and who told us that everything was going on admirably for Banks. My letter may seem at times careless or even inchoherent, but it is really written under difficulties. At least every three Minutes, some one wants to see me, and by the time he has been gratified I have perhaps lost the thread of what I was saying. The fact is that besides the regular duty of the fleet, almost every officer wants something special, and in the case of the volunteer element generally promotion. All these favors asked, can of course only be really granted by the Admiral but as in point of fact the decision must pretty much remain with me, I am as you may suppose for the time a rather important person, whenever either promotion or permission to go North for a short time are in question.

I picked up yesterday among some of the Reb Cartes de visite here one of my brother. With the exception of one or two the Generals are a most seedy looking set of individuals, to which my brother is no exception. Give it to Syl she may value it perhaps for the uniform.

Mrs. Norman Jackson's child being some time since in want of a name, I suggested Maud, which has been accepted, and if the dress can be got ready which is not certain, as I was not looked for so soon, I am requested to represent by proxy some brother in England. As she is a little sesech, I suppose I ought to allow the intimacy to go no further than dinners, but there is no refusing anything to a pretty woman, and I doubt whether under like circumstances I could refuse Mrs. Jeff Davis, were she to ask me so slight a favor in so winning a style.

Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and all in the house As to getting home this summer I dont see a chance of it. Believe me Yours affy

P. Drayton

Flag Ship Tennessee
New Orleans Apl 14 1864

My dear Hamilton

As I told you in my last I should do, I became responsible for another god child by proxy a day or two since and being desirous of performing the part selon les rêgles, must of course make a small present on the occasion, Please ask Mrs. Hamilton, or if she is too busy with the fair, Syl, to pick me out a piece of silver to present to my God daughter, with the following inscription, Anna Maud Jackson, from her Godfather Percival Drayton, April 12, 1864, or as much of this as you think right. Cost to be some where near fifty dollars

and to be sent to the care of Commodore I S Palmer U S Navy 148 Canal St. New Orleans, by Adams Express, unless an opportunity offers by one of the Supply vessels from the Navy Yard at the time it is ready.

We had some grand Tableaux vivants at the Opera house on Tuesday last for the Louisiana Soldiers benefit. It went off very well and must have been quite remunerative. Mrs. Banks wanted me very much to take a part in the final tableaux of the Spirit of 1866 where she was the Goddess of Liberty surrounded by the States. Although general Weitzel was to represent the armies of the U States on the occasion, I could not bring myself to do the Navy part, and am afraid in consquence that I have lost ground in the good graces of the lady of the Commander of the Department.

The Admiral enjoys himself I think vastly here, and would do so much more were it not for the opinion that seems to possess him, that life in New Orleans soon renders a person unfit for the hard life of the profession or at least makes them a little distasteful. We dined yesterday with Mr. Wright the possessor of the Horse fair, who gave us a first class dinner, which did not hurt me, but coming on the top of a good deal of indiscriminate eating and drinking after the Tableaus of the night previous, rather used the Admiral up, which I did not much wonder at, when reminded by him of what he had eaten, for among the articles were the following ones all served as courses and with the highest seasoned sauces, Shrimp soup, Lobster salad, Soft shell crabs, shrimps, Ice cream and strawberries. We are getting under way for Texas so adieu.

Remember me to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me Yours faithfully

P. Drayton

Mr Alexr Hamilton jr
New York.

U S S Tennessee
New Orleans Apl 22 64

My dear Hamilton

We reached here yesterday from a cruise along the Texas coast to look after the vessels there, and get an idea from personal observation of the condition of affairs in that direction.

Quite a brisk little business in the blockade running line, seems to be carried on from their shallow ports through fleets of light draft sailing vessels, which dodge in and out of the numerous inlets which seem to give access to the interior every few miles, and which it is impossible to find vessels on our part to watch. For although our squadron consists nominally of about seventy five vessels, fully one fourth of them are constantly undergoing repairs, and one fourth more ought to be. People dont know how difficult it is to keep boilers in order tried as ours are, where steam is kept up month after month without an opportunity being permitted for the necessary repairs and cleaning out. That no great considera-

tion is thought of for the individual and that the public interest is not allowed to suffer out of any feeling for officers or crews you will understand when I tell you that some of the vessels on the coast of Texas have not been in port for six months, and probably will not be allowed to do so until either the human or the steam machines give out. This kind of life of course appears a very simple matter to people at home enjoying all the comforts ordinarily belonging to that place, together with the additional pleasure of reading about fighting and the general hardships attending the mildest military operations, but it is no joke as any one will soon perceive when thrown in with the actors.

We have met with rather a reverse lately on the red river, very much owing so far as I can learn to the absence of the usual military precautions. I suppose when we have met with a few more we will begin to arrive at the conclusion that politics and war are distinct branches of human knowledge. This of course will be a bitter truth to our rulers as it was to old nobility of Europe when it first began to be insisted that noble birth did not necessarily mean fitness for all the high offices of the state, but we must come to it soon and will unless more successful than heretofore. It is said that Franklin the real soldier of the army is neither asked for his opinion or listened to when it is given, and the consequense was we went slap into the enemy not knowing where he was and the advance a mere confused mass of baggage wagons, artillery and cavalry. Consequence a severe check and the loss of twenty pieces and three miles of waggons. However there is no use of grumbling, all war must have its reverses, but with us we so constantly repeat the same blunders as to make it ridiculous

We remain here for a day or two and then leave for Mobile and Pensacola, at which latter place a rebel raid is threatened, but a pretty bold set of fellows the Rebs must be if they attempt it.

I am glad to hear such good accounts of Syl, but whether it is that household affairs and the worlds vanities occupy all her time, not a scrape of the pen has reached me from her since I left New York, although I have tried to draw one on various occasions. perhaps your writing is considered sufficient evidence of life in the family to answer all purposes. Hoyt the other delinquent just saved a severe reproof for his negligence, by a letter received today.

From your account of Mrs. Hamiltons devotion to the fair, I should judge that you might almost be the person whose complaint in numbers, I saw a short time since somewhere, and who seemed to think that in these times of charitable excitement a man might as well be without a wife, for all the good he derived from her society. However the object for which you are sacrificed is so grand a one, that you must bear your share of its burdens without a murmur, The very sympathy shown for the Soldier will produce a better result than the eventual spending of the money to be raised by the Sanitary fair. I am only sorry that the Navy is so independent as not to bring out a little of the kind feeling being shown towards the Soldier. Even did we need it, I am afraid that for a race so much apart and which never can have much political weight (which with us is what virtue was to the Roman), the sailor would stand little chance with his rival of the other service, who is of the stuff out of which Presidents may be manufactured....

Flag Ship Tennessee
New Orleans Apl 23 1864

My dear Hoyt

Your letter of the 10th reached me yesterday, and I was very glad to hear from you again after such a long silence. for none of your letters to which you allude to as written have reached me. People in the bustle of the great world dont know how welcome news from it of a more confidential character than that which comes through the papers, is to persons leading the humdrum kind of life that we do every where on this station, except at New Orleans, which I am always sorry to visit, because the outside life which one gets acustomed to as do the nuns that of a nunnery after a little practice, always appears distasteful when so immediately compared with a more natural condition, such as is offered by any society composed of the two sexes, particularly when as here, so many people are quite disposed to make our stay a pleasant one.

We have just returned from the Coast of Texas from a kind of tour of inspection, and find that although our squadron consists of near eighty vessels, more are wanted to block up all the rat holes down there. To be sure blockade running is done in rather a small way, but still as whenever a vessel gets in or out a great noise is made about it, either in English or rebel papers, every one is most anxious to prevent all communication whatever, and the not being able to do so, is a cause of mortification. That no one is considered in carrying out these objects you will understand when I tell you, that several of the vessels have not been into a port from as far back as September and October last, and will not perhaps for as much longer, unless the boilers give out. You can imagine the tedium and hardship of such a life, passed in a small vessel, which most of them are. Of course people at home do not see it in this light, and those are generally more severe in their strictures on persons who occasionally want relief for a time, from this life without a joy, in proportion to the little likelyhood there is of their being called on for anything of the same character. However I am not going to write you a grumbling letter, particularly as I so far have no right to complain of any individual suffering, for with the exception of perhaps at times a little too much work to be good or healthy, I am usually well off. and am likely to be, so long as the Admiral is in my vessel, for of course it is not expected that he should devote himself to mere blockading. When the iron clads are really ready to come out of Mobile, it will be of course another matter. If we could only get into Mobile bay now, we could put a stop to all manufacture of iron clads going on there, but this is out of the question until the army can lend some regiments to reduce the forts. We can run by them and cut them off by water, but there our power would end, and as the water is too shallow to permit of an approach to the city, nothing whatever would be gained by any movement on our part, until it can be supported by troops. Our forces on the red river have met with a pretty serious check as you have no doubt seen, much greater than is admitted of course. It is here universally attributed to carelessness, we were led into a trap, into which we walked without any precautions having been taken against surprise, and were marching along in an enemy's

country a mere confused mass of cavalry artillery and supply wagons, the consequence of which was, that we lost at once, twenty guns and three miles of waggons. It is said that the army was so entirely taken up with cotton, as to lose sight of everything else.

We leave here tomorrow for Pensacola and Mobile, at the former of which places I left my ship, for I am not only fleet Captain but command the *Hartford* in addition. This is better in some respects for all parties, as it gives me command of all the conveniences of the vessel for fleet purposes, which could not be the case were the officers in different hands, and when the Admiral wants to make a tour of inspection as at present in a lighter vessel, I can temporarily leave the *Hartford* in charge of the first lieutenant, as I have done now.

The members of congress have so completely grabbed all appointing to the Naval School, that I doubt if there is any other avenue open except through one of its body. That some of those having this power can be approached with a bribe, I do not doubt, but venial as they are supposed to be should think it an exceptional case. At any rate the only person who can help you is the member from your district, either Staatsburg or New York, find him out and tell him what you want. Perhaps he may assist you. At any rate there is nothing like trying. It is of course not pleasant to ask a favor, but it must sometimes be done. If we take Mobile I may help you, but at present my influence is too small to be of much use. particularly as I am absent from the part of the country where all these matters are arranged.

The people here seem very exultant at their recent successes in various quarters, and now talk I understand of making a raid from the direction of Polks army, to occupy this city. It is of course ridiculous, and were such an attempt successful it would be next to impossible for any body of men to be fed, with us in command of Lake and river. The approaches to the river are such, that a few men might hold them against an army, but unfortunately our raw levies are not to be depended upon, and constantly desert places that a regiment of French Zouaves would hold against the confederacy.

From what I gather now the Red River operations are a complete failure and you will soon hear of our forces withdrawing. The worst of it is that Porter and a number of the boats are above the falls, and there seems little chance of their getting down, which will make the position of things a little awkward.

From what I can see of the Sanitary it appears to be another Japanese Prince of Wales & Russian excitement only for a better motive and I believe that City rivalry & politics has quite as much to do with the receipts as care for the Soldiers. However it gives people common interest and that on the right side which is a great deal....

Notwithstanding Guerillas, the up trade on the river seems to be increasing very much, judging from the number of steamers at the Levée, but still this constant firing at our boats must have an effect in interrupting trade if continued, and all the gun boats in the world cannot stop it. This must be done by occupying the favourable points, which it seems we are not strong enough for at present. The Rebs are evidently moving heaven and earth for this spring and summer

campaign; we for the Presidential. Kind remembrances to Mrs. Hoyt also to Gertrude and believe me yours most sincerely

P. Drayton

Mr. L. M. Hoyt
Staatsburg
N. Y.

Flag Ship Hartford
Pensacola May 2 64

My dear Hamilton

Yours of the 20th received, as usual very pleasant reading. There is nothing like a business man for a regular correspondent, and the more work he has to do the better, It seems as if the only occupation which completely fills a persons day without leaving room for anything else, is a life of fashionable ease and enjoyment, If half that is reported of the reckless extravagance of New York and our other cities is true I should think it the precursor of a regular cataclysm. No cause can prosper where while the country is in imminent peril and its finances in confusion, this peril is aggravated by such mad waste and corruption as is seen everywhere. I trust you do not lend yourself to such things and have at least given up Champagne. Seriously speaking our affairs are taking a bad turn, nothing but disaster everywhere, and where it is to stop I dont see, for our enemies are madly in earnest we lukewarm as a nation. There seems to be little doubt down here that the worst defeat of the war next to Bull run is that of Banks, who they say became so perfectly demoralized and vacillating as to have destroyed the little chances that might have remained after the first great blunder. Nothing from present appearance can save Porters fleet except a rise in the Red river which cannot be looked for.

And here *we* are with a lot of wooden vessels to meet the iron clads which are nearly ready to come out from Mobile, some of them quite equal to the *Merrimac,* when any disaster to our fleet would create a panic that I have a little doubt would for the time lose us New Orleans, and all this might be avoided by the presence of a single iron clad in this harbor, as a mere threat if nothing else. But they all stop at places where they are not wanted or at least where as in the James river, they could be spared from protecting that immense army of the Potomac which never seems to be considered safe. New Orleans and the Mississippi is worth more to us than Washington because less easily retaken in case of loss. However I suppose the machine has to work itself along by its own weight as heretofore. a common river boat strengthened and with a little railroad iron might have saved Plymouth twenty wont get it back, and its loss pretty much finishes the union party of N Carolina.

You dont understand perhaps what we are waiting for here, so I will explain our position that you may not think Farragut has lost his energy. The forts at Mobile are very strong and to run in we must run the gauntlet of most power-

ful batteries at short range with channel much obstructed and filled with torpedoes. This however is not the question, but what we should gain by going in. The bay is twenty five miles deep but so shallow that we cannot I think go up high enough to be clear of the fort guns at the entrance. Then as these are well provisioned and will be in just as free communication with the interior with us inside as out, we really therefore except being able to keep up a little better blockade gain nothing by a change of position. The loss on the other side will be considerable, first we are exposed very much to torpedo vessels, and in addition to the fleet of iron clads which although rather afraid to come outside, with their shallow draft and heavy guns might really destroy us at long range. With an army to invest the forts and one or two iron clads to look out for theirs, it would be worth taking the loss of vessels which must follow the running the gauntlet, without it would be simply like a Malay running a muck, knowing that at the end of it you were doomed. The chance of soldiers seems to be put off, by Banks disaster and the arrival of the iron clads by the supposed wants of the Potomac army, so that I really dont see what is to be done. But I do see that if the enemy plucks up a spirit and comes out with the rams, after getting the *Tennessee* over the bar by Mobile (which will be done when the canals now building are finished) and any of our vessels are sunk, there will be a very good chance of losing New Orleans for a time at least. There was a regular panic there before Banks' defeat was known, merely on account of the depletion of the city of its soldiers, and now the soldiers have fallen into such contempt, that all the moral effect from them is gone even if they were there. Withdraw our ships and I believe the city would be taken in a fortnight. In the meantime our ships crews are melting away because congress in its wisdom gave enormous bounties to soldiers who have votes and none to sailors who have not, so that as might have been expected all the sailors have gone into the army, as we are in contravention of the contract keeping men whose times have expired because otherwise we could scarcely keep up the blockade properly.

unfortunately we carry on the war without the singleness of purpose of the people at the South and the consequence is that our enormous resources appear to be neutralized by the much lesser ones of the Rebels. However all this that I have been telling you is not for the public, and I should be hung I suppose if half of it was published, but it is all true and you will find it so before long I am afraid. Banks ought to be at once removed and all political generals with him. He is a first rate politician I have little doubt but has no military taste whatever. You may think I am a grumbler, but I am not alone. I see letters from Porter just as bad, and he does not deal in that line usually. One thing I think at least I may promise that whatever comes we will do our duty by the flag and country.

I am just as busy as ever, writing, seeing people and giving directions from morning to night, a little fighting would be a relief.

The hot weather is beginning to tell on almost all the people who were here last year, I having had the summer at the North am all right so far, and the bomb vessels and some of those which were last year pest houses we are sending home before the yellow fever breaks out in them again.

Uncle Toms Cabin has reached me and I am much obliged to you for sending it. I am very sorry to hear of Langdons ill health, I suppose you all attribute it of course to over exercise just as they do Heenans defeat.

What a commentary on the duration of favor with the people, is the vote of the swords, Farragut who has really done twice as much as McClellan a few hundred votes. and the whole Navy about five, I believe. Gratitude may well be defined as a keen feeling of favors to come. The Navy is unfortunately for itself, no political machine.

I think I have let myself out now pretty generally and feel much easier. Hoyt has felt so much my comments on his lazyness that he has actually written me two letters lately. They were very pleasant ones and I hope he wont backslide again.

I send you a hundred dollars to pay for one or two things I have lately asked you to get for me.

Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton who I hope has recovered from the fatigue and anxieties of the fair, and with the same to all in the house I am Yours affy

P. D.

Flag Ship Hartford
Pensacola May 18 1864

My dear Hamilton

Nothing new since I last wrote, We shall have our turn at a ram soon I suppose as these monsters appear to be quite plenty in Southern ports. We certainly require now some sea going iron Clads and Ericsson will have the opportunity no doubt so long looked for of proving to his detractors that his monitors can keep the sea and what has been also doubted by the envious use their guns there. Although however not much on the ocean we would find one or two of them here very useful, much more so I suspect than that eternal picking at fort Darling and scouting in the James river. I trust that we shall be more successful in our third on to Richmond, but see no particular reason to hope so, as I think the relative force of the two armies is about as usual and perhaps their material this time better than last year. I also think a military man should have been sent up the James instead of Butler, he is an ignoramus about military matters and so hated by the Rebels that they would fight twice as hard as against any one else. It is hard work for us divided as we are, to make head against a united people when it is as much in earnest as is the Southern one, I think the majority which is in a Republic to a great extent the government, has a right to put down a factious minority in league with its enemies, and I only hope to see it done at the North. As some one said in hearing it wondered at that Farragut did not get the sword at the Sanitary, Why should it be a cause of wonder when there are perhaps more secessionists in New York than New Orleans, and who never will forgive him for having taken the latter city.

I send you a Navy Register which the Captain of the Steamer has promised to deliver.

Kind remembrance to all in the house, and believe me

Your friend
P. Drayton

The Admiral desires also to be remembered

Mr. Alexr Hamilton jr
Jauncey Court New York.

Flag Ship Hartford
Off Mobile May 25 1864

My dear Hamilton

We have been here for the last five days, brought out in a great hurry on account of the iron Clad *Tennessee* having got over the Dog river bar and being consequently in a condition to come out on a bender any fine night in company with a few of the like evil disposed.

There is no use in firing at these fellows for the shot glance, but we will run them down if possible. In the meantime there is one comfort at least should we be the party sunk, and that is that down will go at the same time a mass of papers and reports that it is disgusting to look at, and, which it would almost be a relief to get rid of even at such a cost.

Things certainly look better than they did a short time since, and I only hope that before this reaches you Grant will have got Richmond. If Mrs. Hamilton and the persons working with her can only bring about what they are striving for, and stop this senseless and wasteful extravagance, which is acting like a canker to undermine our strength and respectability, they will deserve as well of the country, as the generals who are fighting the battles of the Republic in another direction.

Kind remembrance to her and believe me yours

P. Drayton

Flag Ship Hartford
Off Mobile June 4 1864

My dear Hamilton

We are still here on the watch for Buchannan who does not seem yet to have finished his preparations for coming out, although we look for him every dark night, the practice of these vessels having been so far to prowl about at night run into anything they see sink it if possible but whether successful or not to get home by daylight. Whether Buchanan with the very powerful force he has will be permitted by public opinion to follow this traditional policy I somewhat doubt, and only hope that he will make up his mind to a fight by day-

light. I have as I told you some doubts about wood against iron, but we will give it a fair trial, and if unsuccessful will not I trust be too much blackguarded. I enclose you a couple of confederate notes which may have interest, and two autographs of Washington which keep for me. I come across them every now and then among my papers, and they will only perhaps be hopelessly mislaid if I keep them.

The news we receive from the North is good, but there is a good deal of fight still left in the armies of Lee and Johnson and until they are beaten it is useless to speculate on the future.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me as always

Your friend P. Drayton

Mr. A. Hamilton jr
New York

I send you by Capt Eaton one of the books of reports issued by the Navy Dept it may have some interest.

U. S. S. Hartford
Mobile bar June 19, 1864

My dear Hoyt

I received yesterday yours of May 10th and as few letters require at furthest more than two weeks to reach us, cannot acount for the delay this one has been subjected to. However as it gives me the latest news from home, apart from what is supplied by the Newspapers it is just as welcome as if dated yesterday We have now been lying here a month in daily expectation (or rather nightly) of an attack from the iron clads inside. Why they have delayed so long is a mystery, I suppose some preparations are to be completed. It is a mean kind of a war though this coming out on one in the dead of the night, to blow you up or punch a hole in your side, I dont however allow it to disturb my rest, I make all possible arrangements, and then sleep the night through unless there is an alarm, which takes place every now and then owing to the chase of a blockader, which however as there are very few of them trading to this port does not occur often. We have quite a large force numerically some sixteen vessels around us, being obliged to make up in quantity for quality. but there is little doubt that for the duty we are likely to be called on to perform, the Red 'Italia' would be equal to our fleet and as many more, but as it appears to be a settled policy, that none but Monitors are to be turned out of our work shops except for foreigners, and as this latter class although first rate sea boats, must not have their theoretic reputation jeoparded by being subjected to the test of practice, we at this late stage of the war have nothing to fight iron with except wood, odds against us, which a wise man would scarcely give his enemy except under the influence of a frightful hobby. However it is not our place to reason why, and I dont bother my head much about it, or wrack my brain in trying to understand why we are the only people in the world who have no means of

obliging a contractor to perform his work within a reasonable limit, or for a reasonable price.

Genl Canby paid us a visit yesterday to see the Admiral on business. He must be undeniably clever or he could scarcely be placed in this way all of a sudden in supreme Command. He is certainly one of the most taciturn men I ever met with if you except two of his staff whom he brought with him. This of course proves nothing one way or the other. If half of the stories however are true which are told of the utter state of demoralization to which Banks brought his present army I should think some time required before any fight could be got out of it. Banks I at one time had a pretty good opinion of, but he proved himself on this last expedition so utterly inefficient and helpless, as to have become a perfect laughing stock to the whole soldiery, and this with his lending himself to Cotton and all other speculators has pretty much finished him with all respectable people in that part of the world. Then he was also giving suppers to fast women and behaving in a most indecorous manner, especially for one of his antecedents and bringing up.

If they dont send us down some iron clads, there seems nothing left for us except to wait quietly until the enemy comes out. For to run the gauntlet of the forts, only to come in on an iron fleet of certainly double our power in smooth water, would not seem quite sensible, and I dont believe that even Farragut would venture on such a step. What we do here is however of such little importance compared with what is in progress else where as almost to deprive it of interest. Virginia is the central point of interest, if successful there a blow will be struck that it will be difficult for the Rebels recover from if we there fail no operations here can much effect the great result further than helping time. If the war does not end soon and I am not one of those who think it will, even if we beat them in Virginia, our prospects of a long and dreary blockade is not an attractive future, for a life more entirely devoid of everything which makes life pleasant you can scarce imagine, rolling and tumbling about month in and month out. I am so busy however from morning to night, that I have scarcely time to consider whether I am enjoying myself or not, and indeed were I not of a most quiet temperament which enables me to avoid worry and sleep well o nights, I should break down, for if the other Captains are kept up at night they can at least sleep in the day, which with me is utterly out of the question, for even if not otherwise employed, someone wants to see me on business about every ten minutes in the day, and the dispatches which come pouring in every other day almost, and all of which I have to attend to in some way or other, are enough to turn a mans head, and I often think that those must really have been good old times when it was considered disreputable for a military man to read or write. Every one who has been South a season is now beginning to require quinine, and I among the number although my general health is excellent. Hot of course it is, and although we are a mile from the bar and two from the nearest land still we cannot escape from the mosquitoes, I would of course like to have the war over but am willing to blockade for ten years or be subject to any other inconvenience or hardship rather than give up an inch of our lawful

territory or make peace with traitors other than on our own terms, one of which should be the entire wiping out of slavery to the Rio Grande. Before this is gained however many more valuable lives must be lost and the nation make many sacrifices but what nation has ever yet obtained a name in history without passing through its period of trials, and ours cannot expect to escape the common fate. The power of resistance developed by the rebellion at the south if in any except a cause so unholy might excite our admiration, now one can feel towards it only not contempt....

I thought in the early part of the campaign that some thing decisive would take place to our benefit, but scarcely do now. The Confederacy is not yet sufficiently used up to permit the exertions we are willing to make, to suppress it yet, and I must confess that I do not see how Grant's position is better than that of McClellan. I hope of course to be proved an ignoramus. The failure of all side issues everywhere has gone far to cripple the main operation. In the midst of all our trouble too, there is politics and fiction doing all possible to disturb the operations of the government, Winter Davis talking buncome about the Monroe doctrine which he believes in carrying out now as Mr. Seward would, and if asked if he wanted war with France could scarcely say yes, and if he does not mean this his talk is mere vaporing, and for effect with the unthinking. A little despotism in government is a good thing I believe, the only question is where to stop, and when.

When I commenced I did not intend to write about public matters but it is hard to avoid it as you see.

The Union league have sent Farragut a sword in place of the one which I believe every one thinks he ought to have received from the fair, It is in New Orleans and we have not yet seen it but it is said to be very handsome.

I hope your gout will keep off both on your own account and mine, as I am to hear from you during its absence.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Hoyt and all in your house and at the Majors. and believe me as always

Yours faithfully
P. Drayton

Mr. S. M. Hoyt
Staatsburg New York

As you might like to see the tone of the Southern papers I send you some Mobile & Texas ones.

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
West Gulf Squadron,
Off Mobile June 25 1864

My dear Hamilton

... Tell Mrs. Hamilton that I doubt whether the administration of Washington could give satisfaction without success to our armies. I by no means

think that Mr. Lincoln and his Cabinet are without faults, but take any other set of men that have been in office for the last thirty years and have they done better. I can imagine a better state of things by far, but have we the material among politicians. There is little doubt that the employing Butler and other civilians was a mistake, but the question is, whether it is in human nature to withstand the pressure brought to bear in favor of just such people. Things look bad I think, Grant seems to have played his last card, and nothing seems left but another year of war and mutual exhaustion, but it cant be helped, and we must take it like men, and make the best of what is unavoidable. If we suffer our Southern friends are certainly not on a bed of roses. I have been saying all along we were halooing a little too soon, and it now certainly looks so.

The iron clads dont appear to have done much at the James, but further than maintain the river free which is vital to our army I scarcely see what is to be expected of them. I only wish we had some of them here and I think we could put them to use, but this squadron is as much lost sight of as if it belonged to the Danes, and now the best part of the season has passed, and we must soon expect Yellow fever and hurricanes the former of which has already appeared at Pensacola among some men who were brought out the other day packed like sheep in a pen, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, and in this state taken into Key West where the fever always is. However there is now no help for it, but it is only another proof of the great advantage of a little prevention.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Hamilton and all about you. As they say of the Revolutionary period, these are times that try mens souls, but that is evidently what souls are given us for...

Yours always
P. Drayton

Mr. A Hamilton Jr
New York

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
West Gulf Squadron,
Off Mobile July 3 1864

My dear Hamilton

Nothing new since my last except that we ran a large steamer ashore under the guns of Fort Morgan, and have been trying to destroy her without receiving too much injury ourselves, which it is scarcely worth risking at present unless for cause. I told you that the Loyal League or Club, presented the Admiral with a sword, on the hilt are his initials in diamonds. Will you do me the favor to ask Tiffany what he will charge to make just such a thing in breastpin shape and of a proper size. The Admiral wants to know. I dont know whether we are going to have the yellow fever in Pensacola or not at one time things looked badly, but are now improving. As it is our store house and work shop we might as well have it in the fleet at once. We owe

it to a draft of four hundred and odd men being sent out in a vessel with accommodations for about 100, and then she being sent into Key West where the fever has been rife for two months. I think one can scarcely help referring constantly to the saying of Oxernsten to his son "that when older he would learn with how little wisdom the world was governed."

Remember me to Mrs Hamilton

Yours
P. Drayton

Mr. A. Hamilton
New York

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
West Gulf Squadron.
Pensacola July 17
1864

My dear Hamilton

After my seven weeks blockade of Mobile I am at last in port for a day or two, the visit being rendered necessary to procure coal provisions &c. I shall leave again tomorrow. The Admiral remained outside to watch Buchanan although there is not one chance in a hundred of his doing anything these bright nights, and as we now have an iron clad, the *"Manhattan,"* if he waits much longer we shall probably take the initiative ourselves. We have lately been pretty busy with the blockaders having captured one driven two on shore and chased the others so hard, that judging from the Mobile papers, they were half frightened out of their lives. The difficulty of completely closing one of these Southern ports with its numerous entrances, is I assure you no easy thing, except to those who have not got it to do. It is the simplest thing in the world to go to the North pole while one is over a comfortable fire, particularly to those who have never given it particular attention.

I am perfectly well so far, but we lose officers and men by the necessity of invaliding them at a fearful rate. This climate does not suit the Northerner thats certain, although quite healthy for those accustomed to it from birth.

The *Bermuda* by which I send this is just about starting, and as the Captain is only waiting until I close this, I will take some other opportunity of a quiet growl, for although I complain of people finding fault with us, it does not seem to prevent my taking that full liberty myself when I think there is occasion.

Hope you are passing the summer agreeably, which if you are not with all your surroundings and capabilities you would be I trust ashamed to acknowledge.

Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me

Yours affy
P. Drayton

Mr. A Hamilton jr
Jauncey Court New York.

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
West Gulf Squadron.
Off Pensacola July 14 1864

My dear Hoyt

I must give you the credit of being now what is called among *men,* a good correspondent, Yours of June 10th received a few days since having settled the point both as to time and matter. You tell what all the people are doing about you, and that is just what I want to hear. That you should find fishing excursions and such little divertisements necessary however to make the time pass agreeably, seems strange to me as it would to my companions of the blockade, who cannot imagine anything needed beyond quiet in a pleasant country to satisfy the most exacting person. Although such is the inconsistency of human nature, perhaps after enjoying it for a few weeks, we might even begin to look upon the blockade as bearable from the necessity in us for change, I came in here yesterday to coal, get ammunition, and do a great deal of squadron duty which our six weeks and more outside has caused to be neglected, so that as usual I am very busy, I at least expected to have quiet nights, which have been lately rather a rarity, but to my disgust and almost horror at seven last evening was called to repair at once on board of our only iron clad the *Manhattan,* as she was on fire. Fortunately a steamer which I had sent in here in the morning for ammunition had a steam pump, and by using this and shutting everything up close, we managed to extinguish the fire before much damage was done, but as I did not get to my ship until midnight, I did not gain much by my first night in port. I left the Admiral outside on board of our *Tennessee,* as he did not like to leave there while the rebel one was in face. Although scarcely a chance of her moving while these moonlight nights last, had I not been satisfied of which I should have sent this vessel in with the first Lieutenant and remained with the Admiral, although my doing so would have caused much inconvenience in the future.

So our friend Mrs ——— has wound up in a French prison. What a career has been hers, more romantic than many a romance. The French are such a queer people that she may on regaining her liberty find herself sought after more than ever. I wonder what has become of the husband he seems to have disappeared except from the Navy Register.

Blockading does not apparently disagree with me but still on weighing this morning I had lost twelve pounds. In port I would probably have lost more for this climate tells terribly on the northerner, and we invalid officers and men off at a fearful rate notwithstanding the facilities a ship affords to take care of the sick. I certainly however cannot complain of my own vessel, to prove which I send to days report which has just been brought me, and out of the three names on it, two dont really belong to us, having been invalided some time back and only being on board awaiting the supply steamer to go North. The Admiral remained outside to watch the iron clads of Buchannan which however will not move during these bright nights, darkness being necessary to their success. As we have now an iron clad, Farragut is becoming very restless, and if the necessities of the army will spare us a few soldiers he wont stay quiet long. Unfortunately just as some-

thing is planned, there is an uneasiness about Grant or Sherman, and away go the regiments. I am afraid we shall with difficulty get over the injury caused by Banks' inefficiency and its consequences, but politicians must live, whether the Country does or not. Gold at 250 will make it pretty hard finding the sinews, and I hope before long that we will adopt the Southern policy to take what we want in men or material where we can find it and leave the matter of right to be settled after the war is over, which wont last long with some such energetic system. I suppose such principles would not be popular in Dutchess county but I cant help it. After being an outlaw in my native state I might as well go through with it. I am for crushing the rebellion even if we come down to the original three millions of the first revolution in doing so, and am quite willing that I should not be one of the surviving three. Men can easily be replaced, principles once destroyed can not. Our affairs at present are not in as prosperous a condition as one could desire, but war would not be the serious matter it is, were it not for the alternate hope and fear that always accompanies it. The people of our cities have been dancing and fiddling so long that they almost seem to look upon the crash of armies as the Romans did the fights of the gladiators which were to be looked on from comfortable seats and there criticized. But this cant last forever, sooner or later war becomes a most serious matter to the whole community in some way or other, and our war is not likely to offer an exception to the rule. as even the owners of three hundred dollars will find out. However I wont get off too strongly in the censorious vein. Our people do a great deal although the sacrifices made at the South so completely throw ours into the shade. Kind remembrance to Mrs Hoyt and Angelica also to Gertrude and believe me yours most sincerely

P. Drayton

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
West Gulf Squadron
Off Mobile July 26 1864

My dear Hamilton

Our supply vessel the *Admiral* has just arrived and leaves in an hour for the North. I promised some time since to get some cigars, and have been looking for them for near three months, but they have been delayed owing to various causes, principally yellow fever in Key West. In the mean time to keep the matter in mind, I send you by the *Admiral* five boxes which I happened to have. Give two to Hoyt and go ahead on the others, and I hope that they may tend to quiet you down in these exciting times, and will I trust be doubly welcome, as your conscience might worry you were you to purchase luxuries of this description, in these times of retrenchment and selfsacrifice.

In the same package you will find two books belonging to Carroll Livingston, four Navy Registers, of which we have plenty here, and, I thought you might like to give them away, (one is for Hoyt,) and a book on iron clads which may

interest you. as also a register of our Squadron which I had printed on board for my convenience and that of the other officers in command.

If the army is not bullied by raids elsewhere I think you will soon hear of something doing in this neighborhood, although we have been put off so long, that I am afraid the bad weather is on us, which will interfere materially with our plans. Time perhaps the most important element in war like operations, is sadly lost sight of.

Capt Eaton of the *Admiral* has promised to put my package for you in the express on arrival at New York, so if you do not hear of it drop him a line at the Navy Yard on the subject.

I received a letter from Hoyt yesterday in which he alludes to some remark of mine as to my never hearing from him. Tell him that he has become so regular a correspondent, that if I ever made any complaints I now withdraw them.

Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me

Yours faithfully
P. Drayton

Mr. Alexr Hamilton jr
Wall Street New York

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
West Gulf Squadron
Off Mobile August 3 1864

My dear Hamilton

I have just received your two letters of 19 & 20 ult. which as usual are very interesting to me.

I am very sorry to hear that Syl continues in her peculiar ways of thinking, I thought she had more spirit than to want peace at any price, that is giving up territory slavery and everything else we have been fighting for. It is well that the people who are bearing to an equal extent the burdens and in addition the hardships of the war, have more pluck and endurance, or we should be a disgraced people in history to come and that is always bad I dont think you are quite sound either with your Democratic proclivities, The faults of the war are owing to the character of our people. too much comfort and consequent effeminacy. The southern people are just in that condition which is best for fighting plenty of food and little pelf. How, if you are in favor of an energetic prosecution of the war, you are in favor of putting in that party which to a certain extent is opposed to it, is beyond my comprehension. However every man can only act according to his convictions and you are as much interested in the country and its integrity as I am perhaps more.

However all of the Captains are on board to arrange for going into Mobile which we will do tomorrow if we can get the *Tecumseh* from Pensacola.

Should all turn out right I will write you again, if not why no matter, and you will bid Mrs. Hamilton and every one good bye for me.

Yours faithfully
and ever
P. Drayton

Mr. A. Hamilton jr
New York

I have left to go by first supply vessel your war cigars

Flag Ship Hartford
Mobile Bay Aug 5 1864

My dear Hamilton

We are inside of Mobile bay after a pretty sharp skrimmage, in which you will see from the papers that a good deal of injury was done to us and one monitor blown up by a torpedoe. We understand that the bay was strewn with them, but the only one which fairly exploded was the cause of this frightful accident to the *Tecumseh*

You may suppose I am busy and since three this morning I cannot say that I have been unoccupied for more than a quarter of an hour, and now that it is dark snatch a few moments to write you a few lines for yourself and the family generally.

I wont give you any details for the Newspaper will do all that much better
Remember me to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me

Yours affy
P. Drayton

Long live the Republic, and down with traitors.

Mr. A Hamilton
New York

Flag Ship Hartford
Mobile Bay Augt 19 64

My dear Hamilton

I enclose a letter for Craven with one from his brother who was lost in the *Tecumseh*. I have forgotten where he lives and must ask you to put on it the proper direction. His brothers death was a sad one just as he had an opportunity of making his mark, for his vessel was the only one of the ironclads worth much, and I am satisfied that what one of his officers who was saved said to me was correct which was, "Captain had our vessel not been lost you would have seen a regular iron clad fight, our vessel was a perfect man of war, ready for anything, we had the utmost confidence in our captain and I dont think the

Tennessee could have stood before us for fifteen minutes." All this I doubt not was correct, and had the *Tecumseh* floated a little longer we should have had no after fight with the enemy's iron clad. How it is that all the other vessels escaped from torpedoes is a mystery, for we see by the books captured at fort James, that about ninety were planted on the 3d and 4th alone. I suspect that their harmlessness consists in the great difficulty of keeping the powder dry. At any rate it is a horrid kind of warfare, not worse than mines perhaps, although more efficacious. We are still beseiging Morgan, which will stand out longer than the army people imagine. They blow tremendously and seem to calculate all the time on what they call demoralization. I should think at this stage of the war they might have learnt that we seldom gain anything without hard fighting. I see an account in the Herald of the 6th of our attack and passage of the forts on the 30th July. What a canard. But the worst of it is, that the iron ships are doubled, mortar vessels added, and we hammering away at the city of Mobile. Who says we are not a hopeful people. The fall of Mobile is no doubt hourly looked for, and if twenty thousand men take it they will do well, and our force is three, and to get this New Orleans has been left almost defenceless. I suppose the sheep who run away from their own homes when they are attacked, wont stop a raid of a few horsemen, and ought to see from Richmond and Atlanta that Southern towns dont fall very easily, will pitch into Farragut for not taking this one with a few light draft ships, which cannot approach until obstructions are removed even near enough to use their rifle guns, and to remove these, the troops must control the forts that protect them. However your neighbours feel dont allow yourself to be too sanguine about Mobile. Fort Morgan has at least to be taken first, as until then not a man can be spared for anything else. We are getting a naval battery of four nine inch guns to bear upon it. but you know how difficult breaching is where the glacis entirely protects the scarp, and if the garrison has any endurance, the place must be carried by regular approaches and finally by assault. At least our passage of the forts is the single piece of good luck this year. Everywhere else we have either been beaten or remained pretty much at a stand off.

I have been so run down that this is the first letter I have been able to write of a private character since the day we came in. I never was so worked in my life. Why fighting is mere child's play compared to the preparations required for it, and the keeping ones forces supplied with food coal ammunition &c particularly when as in the present case the main avenue of communication is blocked up. I received a letter from Hoyt with one from you yesterday. He almost seems to despair of the Republic, we who are not within reach of politics view things in a better light. The Admiral has not been well for a few days past suffering a good deal from your old enemy boils, and in the midst of it and of our incessant work we have had fixed on us one or two loafing curiosity hunters, one a son of V———, totally uninteresting, but who on the strength of a letter from Banks (all politeness of course, no friendship) quietly came on board with their baggage, and I understand from Palmer that it requires all his tact to save us from others. I think all the time of the courtier who came to Hotspur for his prisoners.

Glad to hear good acounts of all the people up the River and should like much to see them and you but there is no immediate prospect of my being so fortunate.

I wrote to you to order the breastpin for Farragut so do so whether the letter reaches or not

Kind remembrance to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me

Yours
P. Drayton

Mr A Hamilton jr
New York

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
Off Mobile
Sept 5 1864

My dear Hamilton

I have not heard from you very lately and am afraid that I have not myself written. The fact is that if I was not in a very healthy condition and living on oatmeal and water, I should have been used up long ago as almost every one else has been, even the Admiral who prides himself on standing every thing, but then he will drink a little wine and eat meat at breakfast.

Throwing aside joking however, owing to a variety of causes many temporary others belonging unavoidably to my position, I feel that I am overworked, for from before breakfast until ten oclock at night I am seldom unoccupied with squadron matters for five minutes at a time, and this is not exactly the climate for such devotion to business. I believe in all time and more so now than ever, the real hard work of military life is in the preparation for, not the actual fighting. As usual owing to a want of troops we have I am afraid lost the favorable chance to take Mobile, which could have been done with ten thousand men, but later will probably fail with twenty. It is the old story of the coat not being long enough and first piecing the skirt at the expense of the collar and then the reverse. Whether true or not we are always crying out no men, and to a certain extent it is perhaps true, for from the fearful way in which ours are being gobbled up everywhere, I wonder that any are left at all. Judging from the great facility with which the enemy catch our men, I suspect they dont offer much resistance, and if half we see in the papers is true, I think it is the Northern white, not the Southern black, from which the real slave element is to be shaped, for it looks as if any degredation would be quietly suffered rather than fight The militia of Georgia captured Stoneman, a few horsemen went quietly through Pennsylvania as the same number of Mamlukes might formerly have done through Egypt. However there is no use of talking about what is fate I suppose. Have you heard anything from Tiffany about the Admirals breastpin. Find out when it is to be finished and the price.

As you pass by Brooks Broadway and Broome St. I think, will you stop, and order for me a Captains uniform coat. There is a fat man there in front on

second story, and who knows all about my measure, which he took last about in November. I will send directions for its reaching me.

I got a letter from Syl a day or two since. She seems in a high state of excitement about the taxes and expenses of living, but in other respects appears to me to look upon our war very much as an Englishman or Frenchman might, this is incomprehensible but I suppose not be considered now strange.

The soldiers have pretty much gone off to some threatened point elsewhere, and were it not for the ships I doubt if we would be allowed to remain long even in fort Morgan.

As I find I have got into rather a grumbling vein which I cant get out of I wont write any more until in a more cheerful mood so until then with kind remembrance to Mrs Hamilton.

believe me as always

Yours affy
P. Drayton.

Mr. Alexander Hamilton jr
New York

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
West Gulf Squadron
Sepr 8 1864

My dear Hamilton

I enclose you a letter from Mrs. Jackson who wrote to say how pleased she was at the present for her little girl which Mrs Hamilton and yourself was kind enough to select. As I am not sure whether it will ever get beyond the New York Hotel without your assistance, will you as you pass by there inquire her direction and add it on to what I have placed there. No change here since I last wrote. All the troops have gone pretty much, and we are very much at a standstill. Perhaps the fall of Atlanta may relieve some of Canby's men, in which case I think it wont be difficult to take Mobile, although I dont believe it will be of much importance to us except as a base of operations when prepared to move into the interior.

As our ship is not much use here until something is determined on, I suppose the Admiral will go to Pensacola when we finish with a Court martial which is sitting on two or three hard cases.

There is a talk of Farraguts going North, whether that means this ship or not I dont know, but I should think it would, so until I hear further you need not trouble yourself to order my coat although if it has been already done, let it go on.

Remembrance to Mrs Hamilton and believe me Your friend

P. Drayton

Mr. Hamilton jr
New York.

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
Mobile bay West Gulf Squadron
Sepr 16 1864

My dear Hamilton

I received a couple of your letters yesterday one late the 29th, the other rather old. What you tell me of the 15,000 men left of all Grants great army is appalling. Perhaps Xerxes, had he commanded an army of Americans, would not have placed their disappearance from this earth at such a remote period. Why if we dont come to a draft soon, eight hundred dollars for an average service of perhaps six months would soon finish not only the treasure of the Union but that of the united world. Yet if we are to believe the signs of the times, our people have made up their minds that fight they wont. So when no more money is to be had to bribe, I suppose we will give in. It is a distressing view to take of the matter but I am afraid not very far from a true one, and after all I go for the doctrine of the majority, if for no other reasons, for the very good one that Jeff Davis believes it to be false, and if the majority determines, that not satisfied with the black men being slaves, the Southerners may have the northern whites also, why I am prepared to bow my neck. We must have some government, and I dont know a fairer or in the long run a more civilizing one than that of the greatest number. To prevent this terrible disgrace and crime against humanity however, I am prepared to resist to the last, and trust that the common sence of the masses will soon react, and that they will perceive that if we are not to be a byword in history, we must not earn ease and temporary relief from the pressure of our enemy at the expense of everything that would make these worth having. However I never could understand politics and politicians. I only see by reference to the past, that every free country has been lost, by the selfish determination of the outs to get in, and I suppose we are not to be a marked exception. The Southerners are now called into our domestic affairs just as the Russians were admitted into those of Poland.

You tell me you have some gold and greenbacks of mine, Keep the gold and invest the other in government securities.

I send you a photograph of the ram *Tennessee* taken at New Orleans where she now is.

No change here. The troops have all gone except just enough to garrison the forts, and we are prowling round the defences at the city with our light iron clads and other small vessels. This keeps them in a state of great excitement there, and the garrison is being increased in every possible way, and by the late papers we see that not only Forrest and Dick Taylor but a half dozen of other generals have come to the rescue.

Yours truly
P. Drayton

Sequel I suppose you have received by last mail

U. S. Flag Ship Sepr 19 64
Mobile bay West Gulf Squadron
1864

My dear Hamilton

After the letters had gone I found on my table the first part of one to you. I now enclose it, not that there is anything that makes it worth while doing so, but to explain the sequel. I will also add what I there forgot, when the Brooch is finished send it to Mrs Farragut at Hastings.

Nothing new here we are anxiously looking for a return of Canby's troops to break up the monotony of our life. As the Mississippi river is now pretty quiet, there ought to be a move made in this direction before long. Without it, I dont believe that Sherman will do much more at present, as he could scarcely spread himself much more unless he could look for assistance either in this direction or on the Atlantic coast.

We have had one of the first Northers of the season to day, and it makes the temperature quite pleasantly cool, although I find that the thermometer is at 78°. At 70 we shall be putting on our overcoats.

Remembrances to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me yours sincerely

P. Drayton

Mr. Alexander Hamilton jr
New York

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
West Gulf Squadron
Mobile bay Oct 4 1864

My dear Hamilton

Nothing to tell you since my last. We in something like the position of the British forces before Antwerp, "Sir Richard Strachan waiting for the Earl of Chatham" &c. A move on Mobile now would greatly assist Sherman but it cant be made without men.

The weather is very hot and with the yellow fever quite bad in New Orleans on one side, and the break bone fever at Pensacola on the other, we are pretty fortunate that we remain so healthy, particularly as under the greed produced by the new bounties, we were receiving shoals of the most wretched recruits I ever saw, just right for disease.

I think I mentioned that the letter you enclosed reached the young man for whom it was intended on the *Metacomet.*

I in turn will get you to let one of your young men attend to the payment of a subscription to Frank Leslies weekly which will be explained by the note accompanying the money. Please keep the receipt until you hear further from me however, as we may be recalled from this station, in which case it might be lost. When anything is decided on this subject I will write you further.

We have certainly been meeting with a good deal of success lately, but still there is little chance of any treating until the South is ready to give up the inde-

pendence point, and that it wont do until we beat at least one of its great armies. There may be trouble in supplying the large bodies of men collected about Richmond and Atlanta, but I dont believe that there is any want of provisions in the country generally, in proof of which we can buy chickens and eggs cheaper in this neighborhood than at New Orleans, or even New York I suspect, the former being only six dollars a dozen.

I enclose a note from the Admiral with five hundred to pay for the pin, and the remainder send to his wife at Hastings, The intention was to make the matter a surprise, but as in such cases usually occurs, the secret was too much for him, and perhaps he would not have been a good husband had it been otherwise. Many thanks for your and Mrs. Hamiltons kind desire that I should make number eleven in your well filled house. The idea of such a thing being possible, is in itself tantalizing at this distance, for I shall always look upon the quiet times I enjoyed with Mrs. Hamilton and yourself in the Square as among the pleasantest of my life.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me

truly your friend
P. Drayton

Mr. Alexander Hamilton jr
Jauncey Court
New York

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
Mobile Bay
Oct 20 1864

My dear Mrs. Hoyt

I received your very pleasant letter acknowledging the receipt of the rebel Sword yesterday. It is not a very effective weapon as you say but you would find it dangeous enough even in its blunted condition, particularly if the point is used. In modern warfare however it is a weapon little prized except by the cavalry, although it is considered as indispensable to mark the officer, and all those who had none at the surrender of the forts were obliged to account for such an omission, which some did by telling gross lies, being ashamed to acknowledge that they had been thrown away or broken to prevent our getting them. The Commander of the fort Page was one of those who had no side arms, and for some time in consequence the business of the Surrender was stopped as my coadjutor General Bailey refused to proceed until this was fully accounted for. The fact was as I told them that they seemed to have no hesitation in giving up their persons to save their lives but stuck at the rendering of a sword, to the persons who according to all the rules of war were entitled to it. However from my experience of the Southern officer he is a pretty common fellow, and evidently goes strongly for melodramatic effect and nothing else. The excuse of one of the prisoners was that he had lost his sword at Vicksburg and had not been able to raise money enough since to purchase another.

I thought a short time since that there was a chance of our coming North, but it is now I think settled that we remain here at least for a time. Although I would of all things like to see my friends again, still I dont know but it is better to stay where I am for the present. There would be little chance of my remaining at home more than a month, and indeed I would not care about doing so while the war lasts. This being the case I am better off here perhaps at least for the winter, than I would be on any other station, and I dont believe in the practicability of taking Wilmington, except with light iron clads, which we have not, and if we had, could not use at this season. Were it not for Prices raid in Missouri, which has necessitated the withdrawal of troops from this Department we should by this time have most probably been in possession of Mobile. In the meantime the Rebs are as usual fortifying immensely, which however as we generally take the fortifications does not matter much. This bay being thirty miles deep we have it pretty rough sometimes where we are at anchor, but the condition of things is so vastly improved, from the outside blockade which has been kept up for the last three years without a minutes intermission, that no one complains. Our life is rather a monotonous one as you may suppose, but I am so busy from morning to night that it makes little difference to me where we are or what doing. We have the yellow fever on one side at New Orleans and what is called the break bone fever at Pensacola on the other, and as we are in constant communication with both, it is rather remarkable how free we keep from sickness, although with all my supposed immunity from such things I could not entirely escape the latter, which much to my surprise kept me in bed for three days. It is a most singular disease and although few cases have proved fatal, out of several thousand persons at Pensacola it is said that scarcely one has escaped at least a touch of it.

I am glad to hear what you tell me of John Astors vote as it proves that a very considerable change must have taken place in public opinion since the Chicago platform arrangement. McClellan might be perhaps borne but to take Pennington (a man who from his antecedents might well have his seat in the Southern congress), would be a little too much. How what is called the Peace party could take root in our country under present circumstances, is I must confess beyond my comprehension, but then so is lying and stealing, but yet they exist and not to a small degree. With all our plunders and blunders, we seem to be steadily advancing towards the conquest of the south and the freeing of the slave population, which goes far toward the accomplishment of that end. When these two things are done, we can have not only an honorable peace but one made in the interest of modern civilization, until these objects are attained I cannot understand how any American, possessed to the least degree of what the world call love of country can talk of Peace and indeed I am satisfied that the persons who do so must feel that it is a sacrifice of future self respect to present and by no means very durable comfort. I hope you will find a house to suit you this winter, if only for Angelica at whose age a little town dissipation is almost a necessity, but yet if half I hear of high rents be true I am afraid you must pay most extravagantly for the luxury. How people manage to make the two ends meet with the enormously increased prices of all articles even of prime necessity and which

must be had is more than I can imagine. The sacrifice which the Southerners make however willingly are so incalculably beyond anything which we are called on for, that our people ought to be shamed into patience. War is the most expensive of all luxuries and can only be carried on at the expense of the others. That it is a great curse I suppose every one will admit, but those nations who persistently refuse the wager of battle do so only at the sacrifice of their dearest rights, and will not long keep property independence or even life. However I trust the elections will give a quietus to that party among us which places a life of ease above national honor or the rights of humanity. Large numbers of people black and white are constantly finding their way into our lines. They describe great misery existing everywhere, but not a scarcity of provisions. But the great trouble seems to be the disposal of the women and children who are left without protection, and without means of earning a living.

A large mail was taken lately in Mississippi and among the letters were many from high officials, recommending the arming of the negroes. As a sample, I enclose one. This ought to make those among us who pretend to have scruples on the subject feel a little foolish.

I cannot commiserate with you on the absence of visitors this summer. To me living constantly in a crowd the perfect quiet of a country house seems the perfection of life, although very probably after trying it for some time I might think differently....

Truly your friend
P. Drayton

Mrs. L. M. Hoyt
Staatsburg
New York

U. S. Flag Ship Hartford
Mobile Bay
Oct 26 1864

My dear Hamilton

I received your letter of the 14th I suppose, although it is dated the 4th that of my letter which you acknowledge. The enclosure for the Admiral I gave him. Much obliged for having invested my funds, which you need not have held thinking I might find use for them here. Why except at rare intervals for the purchase of a few chickens and some eggs, money is of no more service here, than it would have been in the Sandwich Islands when they were discovered. We are in that delightful condition, of persons without wants or what is the same thing without the possibility of gratifying them. If worth a million I could not resign during the war, and without doing so, it would personally be of no more value than so many chips. To be sure Syl or some of my relations might spend it, but that is not looked upon as entirely satisfactory.

What a time they must have had at Drayton house with the Archbishop and his supporters. I for one however would rather read about it than see it.

No change here, the rebels are straining every effort to get their troops across the Mississippi, and this keeps Canby so busy in that neighborhood and Missouri, that he cannot spare a man for us.

The papers talk of large forces being collected apparently for the attack of Wilmington. I for one do not think it possible to do anything there this winter, The big ships might fire outside for a year, and we have no light class iron clads, and had we could not use them at this season. A very large land force might perhaps be landed north of fort fisher, but where is this force to come from. I should not think Grant could spare it. and if he could, it is no joke to land troops on the Atlantic coast in winter. Porter is however a smart fellow and will do all that is possible under the circumstances.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Hamilton and believe me

Your friend
P. Drayton

Mr A Hamilton jr
New York

2012 De Lancey Street
Philada Jany 21 65

My dear Hamilton

I reached here last evening and found that my sister in laws mother Mrs. Coleman had only died the day before from the effects of an accident caused by her horses running away which slight in itself was too much for an old lady in feeble health.

Had my brother telegraphed me the fact I should not have come on, as it is not pleasant to be in a house under such circumstances although the death was not in it. I left the Admiral well, His stay is so uncertain that I thought I might as well come here to see my brother, as I could do nothing further either for him or myself. He lives in society from morning to night, and seems to enjoy the excitement much. He and his wife went to the opera with the President and lady the night before I came away. The former quite won Mrs F's heart by his genial manner. She would not tell much that occurred for fear of its getting into the papers, as she said, but one joke I must repeat. She remarked how pleasantly distance softened the music yes was the response it is like time on whisky.

The skates have arrived for which I am much obliged. Tell Mrs Hamilton I will see that the photographs are returned in due time. It was not necessary to pay any postage so I hope you did not go to the expense of stamps although if you did save them, it was unusual economy on your part.

I think nothing will be decided about the Squadron, until the question of promotion is settled in the meantime I shall secure at least a few weeks rest.

Glad to hear the children are well again in 56, and hope the same may be said of 18 leaving out again.

Hoyt is like the Admiral dinner almost always produces an unfavorable effect

on the morrow. Many thanks for your desire to see me in New York, but I shall remain here first a week or two Kind remembrance to Mrs H and believe me

Yours

P Drayton

2012 De Lancey Street
Philada Jany 26 65

My dear Hamilton

Your letter and its enclosure was duly received. I have just received one from Mrs F written in great excitement at the sudden departure of the Adml, who it seems was sent off in the most sudden and unprepared manner at ten oclock at night after a short interview with the President. She says that both the Secretary and the Adml wanted me very much but there was no time to be lost, The papers say he has gone to the James, but she only knows that he left for Annapolis. We seem not for the first time this war to have been caught napping by the enemy, who must I suppose have taken advantage of the absence of our iron clads, as this can however I suppose be soon remedied if their first attack was defeated, there ought not to be much danger to be apprehended from a second.

If I felt any security that I would catch the Admiral whose absence the Secretary assures Mrs F is only to be for a very few days I would go off at once and join him In the meantime I have written to beg that I may be sent to do so should there be any prospect of his detention where he now is.

The question of the command of the West gulf is finally settled and against both Rodgers and myself in favor of a Commodore Thatcher an old and very good officer who was in the attack on fort Fisher, and whose ship being required for other service he had to be detached from her. The reason given is that Rodgers friends in Washington who are very powerful, were so persistent in urging his claims, against mine that for the sake of peace the question had to be settled in favor of a third party. This of course is not very satisfactory, but it must do. As the decision is likely to give me a little rest the disappointment is not by any means what it would perhaps have been after six months at home. In the meantime I am doing all I can to utilize the cold weather in building myself up for future work. I skated yesterday and to day besides taking any amount of walking in addition, and breakfast at eight.

If not ordered to join Farragut I shall remain here a week or ten days more, and I trust that his remaining in the James will be settled at once, for I dont like a continuance of this hanging on by the eyelids.

If you want to send anything to the Admiral or Mrs F. direct care of Hon Gideon Welles Navy Dept as Mrs F is staying at his house at present. The photographs of Fort Morgan arrived safely.

Kind remembrance to Mrs Hamilton and believe me

Yours affy

P Drayton

Mr A Hamilton Jr
New York

2012 De Lancey St
Philada Feby 1 65

My dear Hamilton

Glad to hear that you have been enjoying yourself in the country. The hours spent in the open air skating or coasting are worth to you more than even the best paid ones passed in your office, always supposing you can bear the loss of paying time.

I have been following up my preaching for the last week by the most indefatigable skating, which has occupied my day to such an extent that I am really glad at a thaw, which today puts a stop to the amusement, and gives me an opportunity of doing many things which I have been obliged to let slide.

You will see that the Admiral has got back from the James, having found that there was nothing for him to do there. I received this morning a long letter from Mrs F. who does not seem to like the gratification that her man derives from being sent off in this way at a moments notice. The fact is that after occupying so prominent a position for years the Admiral I suppose does not like to come down to an officer on no particular duty even with the douceur of the Vice Admiralty. He is about organizing the board which is to recommend persons for promotion. In the beginning to all appearances a simple matter but which will I think take proportions that will go far to make it a most troublesome job.

I shall remain here at least a week longer perhaps ten days, and when I do come on will be very glad to occupy one of your small rooms at 18 if it should be undisposed of, for a week or so, but I dont want to leave here until quite sure that I shall not be required at Washington.

Enclosed are some stamps that you may not have both trouble and expense when you forward my letters.

Kind remembrance to Mrs Hamilton and believe me

Yours faithfully
P. Drayton

Mr A Hamilton Jr
New York

2012 De Lancey St
Feby 13 65

My dear Hamilton

Much obliged for the letters you sent me and whch arrived this morning. I have been trying to get away from here for a week but there is always something to detain me. I hope now to get off the end of this or beginning of the next week but will let you know of the day, before I start.

I hear pretty regularly from the Admiral or Mrs Farragut. They are enjoying themselves much in the way of dinner parties one of which was at the Presidents. I hope the Admiral wont use himself up which he is bound to do, if he does not hold in a little. This terrible snow storm has broken up the most delight-

ful skating on the river, not I am afraid to return this season. I at least however have the satisfaction of feeling that I lost few opportunities of enjoying it.

Kind remembrances to all in the Square and believe me

Your friend
P Drayton

Mr A Hamilton Jr
New York

2012 De Lancey Street
Feby 15 65

My dear Hamilton

I am very sorry to hear that you are as we express it, under the weather, more skating and less indoor work, would perhaps go far to guard against another attack, suppose you try the system.

I am sorry to miss Mrs Hoyt but could not get away from here. I hope now however to do so on Saturday, and shall trust to see you at dinner in your usual good health and spirits.

The weather is perfectly execrable but before it fairly set in this morning to snow and sleet, I managed a couple of hours skating.

As you say the Admiral is most certainly going through almost as much risk of life with all his dissipation as he has in his battles, and I am really afraid that he will seriously impair his health before the winter is over. I have written to tell his wife that because I am away she must not permit him to run wild, and get back to the late hours which through constant lecturing I thought to have somewhat broken in on.

Kind remembrance to all at home and believe me

Yours affy
P Drayton

Mr A Hamilton Jr
New York

U S S Baltimore
City Point Mch 16 65

My dear Hamilton

We arrived here this morning and are now quietly at the wharf to remain perhaps until tomorrow when after taking General Grants evidence in the case, we shall move up the river near the obstructions where our fleet is lying at anchor, so as to be able to get witnesses without too much inconvenience. The weather here is charming, regular Spring, but still the roads are said to be so execrable that Grant says he could not possibly move artillery, but he evidently

thinks could he, that Lees army would be non est in a week. We passed an hour wth him this morning. His log house is small but clean and comfortable, and differs little from the others which are arranged on each side in regular rows for his staff, forming together quite a village, on a bluff overlooking the river, He showed us his medal which is massive enough but no high order of workmanship, having on one side a likeness which far from does him justice, as his appearance is quite pleasing, and with as little the appearance of a man who drinks as any one I have ever seen, from which I judge that he is now at least a sober man. He left Washington on the afternoon of the day I wrote to you....

We are very comfortably established on board here, and as no one is permitted on board but the court of seven members, there is plenty of room and some to spare, and altogether it is so far superior in comfort and gentility to Willards, as can well be conceived. Jenkins is with us and keeps up a pretty constant flow of talk notwithstanding the many jokes he has to bear on the subject. All kind of battles are fought, and we have every detail of the capture of Fort Fisher.

Grant was unusually chatty this morning and quite astonished those who had seen him before by his fluency. Among other things he said that Sheridan was the best cavalry officer alive, or that ever had lived. I am not sure which, either is strong, and that there was no better infantry man. When you write give me Ballars epitaph about "taking other things." Notwithstanding all the talk, I am going right through my German books and shall have to send for some more soon if I am not given more to do....

Deserters come in freely and speak of great loss of heart. They say the men will not fight any more, and that a great part would run away, but for thinking that Shermans advance will soon cause the necessary breaking up of their army, when they can get off as stragglers or prisoners, not liking the name of deserter to be attached to them.

Grant says his army could be divided and one half beat Lee's if he could get at it, and it seems to be thought that a few more days of the windy dry weather we have had will put the roads in order....

Yours affy
P. Drayton

Mr A. Hamilton Jr
New York

U S S Baltimore
City Point March 26 [1865]

My dear Hamilton

The return mail does not seem to be much more rapid in arriving here, than the one we send North is in reaching you, as your letter of the 22d only got to me this morning. To be sure I am not exactly at City Point although that is my Post office, but at a place called Varina landing about twenty miles above, where we moved the steamer after taking General Grants evidence, so as to be more convenient to our iron clads on board of which are most of the remaining

witnesses. We finished with Parker's case on Saturday, and hope to do so with the other three which are of less importance by the end of the week, when we shall return to Washington and await further orders.

Last Sunday I spent with Meade at his head quarters, and took with him a long ride along our lines. To me they did not look at all strong, although he considered them nearly impregnable as he did those of the enemy. They would perhaps be so where the two armies are pretty nearly matched in numbers, but otherwise certainly not I should think on the side of the weaker party. I saw your nephew Phil, as well as the tower which figured so largely in his Fathers account, but much as I am always given to ascend such places, was obliged to give it up, when I found it could only be done by keeping Mead and a cavalcade of at least forty persons waiting for me until I had got my view from the Summit, no one of the party having curiosity enough to offer to accompany me in the ascent. However we have one a little above where we now are which is of the same height, and commands a finer view, taking in as it does all of the river and its batteries up to Richmond, this I took the earliest occasion to ascend. It is just above the Dutch gap canal which is I should say a perfect failure for the purpose for which it was intended. Today we were to have spent with General Ord whose headquarters are on the North side of the river, but the wind is so high and the weather so disagreeable that no one will bring themselves up to the uncomfortableness of riding over the country on such a day.

As I was breakfasting with Porter yesterday a telegraph came from Grant, stating that the enemy had broken through our line near Petersburg, and would probably make for City Point, and calling for Gunboats in the Appomattox. This of course caused a little momentary excitement, and there was an immediate hurrying off of our vessels, to the scene of action. but as we learned in the evening the attempt whether real or false came to grief, as Grant reported that he had taken two thousand prisoners and driven back the Rebs. The attempt must have been I think a blind to some other movement, perhaps an attack on Sheridan, who is moving this way, and is looked for tonight. Our vessel is very comfortable but I must confess the eating department might be better. There being no market however within reach it is not easy to obtain the necessary material to work on. This does not as you may well suppose cause me much thought and thanks to the plain living and a reasonable amount of exercise I am getting into fine condition again.

Much obliged for the epigram on Butler, which I have every reason to believe was written by Porter, who it seems is much given to such things....

There must be a fearful time in Wall Street. I suspect many of those who a few weeks back supposed that they had fortune in a string, begin to perceive that the feeble Goddess has not changed her character. Gold is however not to be long kept down to fifty or sixty premium of this I am convinced. The end is not yet, although we are perhaps almost within sight of it, but much money is to be used up before we can even think of retrenching, and until we do there is no chance of a steady appreciation in greenbacks.

You can send me all letters from outside the city those from within please open and answer if necessary. Yesterday Meade was here with a dozen Philada

women including his wife and family. Stanton with a large party a day or two before, and the President is about to day, so you may well suppose that this is a great place for excursionists. Indeed it would appear as if no public business could be transacted without a certain number of the fair sex being parties to it.

I understand there are rules against officers having their wives with them, but as Grant and his staff seem to have at least one a piece, Mead's is about, and Genl Ord just came on board with his. I suppose that like a great many other rules it is intended to apply to the little fellows not the big ones....

The Admiral is I think in Norfolk but I have not heard from him since I left Washington. The board of which he was President decided on certain persons for promotion, and sent their names into the Senate for confirmation just a half hour too late, I am afraid now it will have to go over to the next Congress. The matter was badly managed, there having been I think a good deal of unnecessary delay in coming to a decision.

Jenkins begs to be remembered to Mrs Hamilton and yourself, and with the same from me to Mrs Hamilton Mrs Livingston and the young people in the house I am as always

Yours affy
P. Drayton

P. S. The key of my box should you want it will be found in your drawer at home.

Mr A Hamilton Jr
New York

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